

ISLAM IN THE MALAY WORLD : AL-FALIMBAN'S SCHOLARSHIP

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*To My beloved late father, Pehin Penyurat Haji Awang Ahmad bin
Pehin Jawatan Dalam Haji Awang Mohammad Yusof (d.1436/2015),
May Allah sanctify his soul and bless him.*



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Transliteration

Except for common terms such as Islam and the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the transliteration of Arabic words, terms and names in this book basically follows the rules employed by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. This also applies to Malay persons whose names are of Arabic origin rather than using their popular Malay spelling: e.g. ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī rather than Abdul Samad Palimbani or other Malay variations. Non Arabic Malay names are retained in their original spelling, as well as book’s title as romanised by the editor or the publisher.

All foreign words (or non English words) are italicised throughout the text. Diacritic marks for Arabic words are used throughout the text except for words used in their common English forms such as Islam and the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Names of places that have been anglicised are used in their familiar form: thus ‘Mecca’ instead of ‘Makkah’, or ‘Medina’ instead of ‘Madīnah.’

As a rule, the plural of all Arabic words is formed simply by adding ‘s’ to their more familiar singular forms: thus, ‘*isnāds*’ instead of ‘*asānīd*,’ or ‘*ḥadīths*’ instead of ‘*aḥādith*.’ However ‘*ulamā*’, *muḥaddithūn*, and occasionally *fuqahā*’ are kept in their Arabic plural forms.

All dates cited include both the Muslim date or Anno Hijri (A.H.), which is given first, followed by the Gregorian date or Anno Domini (A.D.) after an oblique stroke: thus 1132/1719, 1254/1839. This will allow readers unfamiliar or confused by the Hijri calendar dates to readily know the equivalent Gregorian dates.

For the transliteration of Arabic words and names used in this book, the following table illustrates the system is implemented:

Transliteration

Arabic	English	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
أ	<i>a</i>	ب	<i>b</i>	ت	<i>t</i>
ث	<i>th</i>	ج	<i>j</i>	ح	<i>h</i>
خ	<i>kh</i>	د	<i>d</i>	ذ	<i>dh</i>
ر	<i>r</i>	ز	<i>z</i>	س	<i>s</i>
ش	<i>sh</i>	ص	<i>ṣ</i>	ض	<i>ḍ</i>
ط	<i>ṭ</i>	ظ	<i>ẓ</i>	ع	<i>‘</i>
غ	<i>gh</i>	ف	<i>f</i>	ق	<i>q</i>
ك	<i>k</i>	ل	<i>l</i>	م	<i>m</i>
ن	<i>n</i>	ه	<i>h</i>	و	<i>w</i>
ي	<i>y</i>				

ء is denoted by ‘ when not at the beginning of a word.

ة is denoted by *h*, except in *idāfah* constructions where it is denoted by *t*.

Short Vowels:

ـَ is denoted by *a* ـِ is denoted by *i* ـُ is denoted by *u*

Long Vowels:

ـَـ is denoted by *ā* ـِـ is denoted by *ī* ـُـ is denoted by *ū*

Diphthongs:

ـَي is denoted by *ay* eg. *Sayr*, *Zayn*, etc. ـَو is denoted by *aw* eg. *Yawm*, *Tawhīd*, *al-Jawharī*, etc. The *shaddah* ّ is denoted by the doubling of the letter.

The definite article ال is denoted *al-* in the case of moon or lunar letters (*al-qamariah*) thus *al-Ahdal*, *al-Fādānī*, etc. and is assimilated with the ل (*l*) of the preceding article in the case of sun or solar letters (*ash-shamsiyyah*), thus *aṣ-Ṣamad*, *az-Zabīdī*, *at-Tārīkh*, *as-Sammān*, *ad-Dīn*, etc. except when it follows an inseparable preposition or construction, in which case it will be denoted ‘*l-*’, thus *fī ‘l-qarn*, *wa ‘l-mi‘rāj*, *bi ‘sh-shuyūkh*, *wa ‘th-thālith*, *li ‘l-qurbah*, etc.

The divine name (*lafẓ al-jalālah*) is transliterated as ‘*Allāh*’ in all cases.

Preface

The subject of this study, ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī, an eighteenth century Muslim scholar from Palembang, Sumatra, although known to modern scholarship still deserves a more focused and analytical study. It is possible to identify many of his works that have not been utilised by modern scholars. These mainly include unpublished manuscripts and a few of his published works. As a result of my examination of these manuscripts and in addition to his published works, significant details of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī’s life, his role as a scholar and *Ṣūfī*, and his contributions to the intellectual developments of the Malay Archipelago have come to light and can now be presented in some detail and more critically than has been done thus far.

Despite being known only as a *Ṣūfī* in the Malay Archipelago through his magnum opus *Sayr as-Sālikīn* upon which his fame is chiefly based, this study uncovers evidence of his erudition in virtually every aspect of the Islamic religious sciences. This is substantiated by tracing his contacts with numerous major scholars of his period, the subjects he learned from them and the evidence that he later transmitted these teachings to his disciples through oral instructions and his written works in addition to testimonies from his own students. It is by analysing his teacher-student links that we can better understand his place in the nexus of the eighteenth century scholars and highlight his central position in the intellectual network of that time.

This book, in five chapters and three appendices attempt to address the following topics:

An examination of the range of sources relevant to the study of 12th/18th century Islamic religious scholars in the Arab and Malay worlds with whom al-Falimbānī had direct or indirect intellectual links. These sources include Arabic biographical dictionaries, collections of *isnāds* and *thabat* works, catalogues of Arabic and Oriental manuscripts, and works of contemporaneous ‘*ulamā*’ to al-Falimbānī. I attempt to highlight the importance of such sources in the introductory chapter.

The introductory chapter also provides a brief critical survey of the development of scholarly links between the Malay Archipelago

and the Arab world, which evidently intensified dynamically from the seventeenth century onwards through direct scholarly contacts. This is followed by a survey of the development of Palembang as a new Islamic learning centre in the eighteenth century.

The first chapter provides a critical survey of sources and contemporary studies on al-Falimbānī and his cultural context; using this as a base enabled this research to resolve a number of issues surrounding the life of al-Falimbānī. Based on fresh evidence from unpublished manuscripts and biographical reports by his contemporaries, also helped to eliminate a number of erroneous conclusions deduced by previous studies. Research in such a wide range of sources made it possible to attempt a more accurate reconstruction and somewhat detailed biographical data of al-Falimbānī. This is the subject of chapter two.

Detailed examinations of his teachers further revealed his scholarly activities and his crucial role in connecting scholars of earlier generations with later scholars comprise chapter three; while a thorough investigation of his close students provides information on his scholarly discourse and further historical information on his life. This form the fourth chapter. My research has made it possible to highlight his central position in scholarly networks and his respected career as a teacher in Mecca and Zabīd.

Chapter five presents an analytical and critical study of all of his known writings, including mainly unpublished manuscripts in addition to his few published works. This assisted my study in further charting his scholarly activities in terms of his teaching and writing which further highlights his contributions to the intellectual and socio-religious development of the Malay Archipelago and its links with Arabic centres of Islamic learning and culture during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

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I cannot leave The University of Sydney without thanking the staff in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, especially Dr Nijmeh Hajjar, a Senior Lecturer, for her kindness and encouragement, and the helpful team of people at The University of Sydney Library especially the staff of the Interlibrary Loans/Document Delivery Department: Bruce Isaacs, Rod Dyson, Aleksandra Nikolic, Cong Tam Dao and Jim Nicholls, for the help they rendered in obtaining sources from overseas for my use.

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Introduction

Preamble

The subject of this work is the eighteenth century Muslim *Ṣūfī* scholar ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī and his contribution to Islamic intellectual life in the Malay world and in centres of learning in the Arab world. In order to successfully do this, al-Falimbānī needs to be placed in his social and historical context. This requires knowledge of those scholars and intellectuals who were prominent and active in the Islamic centres of learning during this period. This information can be traced through examining the primary Arabic sources from that time, specifically the two genres of biographical dictionaries (*kutub at-tarājim*) and works on scholarly intellectual transmission (*isnād* and *ijāzah*).

In order to correctly identify and benefit from consulting biographical compilations covering the period in question, we have to understand how this genre of literature works. Therefore, the following section will concisely discuss various types of compilation and highlight those relevant to this study. The second section of this chapter discusses the importance of *isnād* and how scholars preserved this tradition in regards to transmitting *ḥadīth* and also scholarly texts. This is relevant to this study because it allows us to trace the teacher-student link between al-Falimbānī, his teachers and his students. In addition, it allows us to view his contemporaries in a wider context, specifically those with whom he did not have a direct relationship, but nevertheless were prominent at the time.

The final section of this chapter discusses intellectual links between the Malay and Arab communities and also the evidence showing that they intensified from the seventeenth century onward.

Biographical Compilations

The Arabic biographical dictionaries of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.H. (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D.), constitute an invaluable

category of sources for information on ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī, his teachers, students and contemporaries. In his pioneering work, Azyumardi Azra utilised a number of these sources, although there are still several important Arabic biographical dictionaries he did not utilise.¹

Most of these biographical dictionaries that previously had not been utilised, relate to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.H. (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D.), the period of this study in which al-Falimbānī lived. However, biographical dictionaries pertaining to earlier and later periods especially the eleventh A.H. (seventeenth A.D.) and fourteenth A.H. (twentieth A.D.) centuries are also useful for this study, and I have therefore utilised a number of these as well. Examining the biographical dictionaries from the eleventh century A.H., provides us with links and information on al-Falimbānī’s ‘grand-teachers,’ while consulting the fourteenth century A.H. sources provides us with accounts of his students and their students. Thus, these Arabic biographical dictionaries taken together furnished essential information for the current study, particularly on the networks of scholars with whom al-Falimbānī was connected, and the extent of their intellectual activity at the time.

As a rule, the compiler of a biographical dictionary in the Islamic tradition includes in his work information such as the subject’s name and ancestry, date of birth (if known), date of death, a list of his teachers and occasionally his students, a bibliography of works written by the subject (*muṣannafāt* or *taṣānif* or *mu’allaḥāt*), his travels, pilgrimage accounts and sojourn (*riḥlāt* and *nuzūl*), as well as his virtues and merits (*faḍā’il* and *manāqib*). Every so often, depending on the subject’s field of interest (*muḥaddith*, *faqīh*, Qur’ān specialist, *Ṣūfī*, etc.), we can find useful anecdotes (*nawādir*), formal epistles and correspondence (*rasā’il* and *murāsalāt*) and reports on miracles (*karāmāt*) particularly of *Ṣūfī* scholars.

The range of compilations of these biographical dictionaries is quite varied, with some compiled by the biographer on ‘ulamā’ of a specific period or century such as al-Muḥibbī’s (d. 1111/1699) work on notable persons of the eleventh century A.H.; al-Murādī’s (d. 1206/1791) work on notable persons of the twelfth century A.H.; al-Bayṭār’s (d. 1335/1916) history of the thirteenth century A.H.; and ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s (d. 1391/1971) biographical notices of some of the scholars in the fourteenth century

A.H.² Within this classification (on ‘*ulamā*’ of a specific period in time), apart from providing biographical entries on scholars in alphabetical order, some biographers also arrange the subjects according to generations (*ṭabaqāt* sing. *ṭabaqah*) such as al-Ghazzī’s (d. 1061/1651) *Orbiting Planets on Notables* of the Tenth Century A.H.³ In this work, al-Ghazzī divides the ‘*ulamā*’ into three generations according to their year of death corresponding to the three thirds of that century. Within each of these generations the names are arranged in alphabetical order.

Al-Ghazzī’s method of classification is followed by al-Ahdal (d. 1250/1834) in his *an-Nafas al-Yamānī* on his own teachers and their teachers.⁴ The only difference is that though al-Ahdal divides his teachers into *ṭabaqāt*, he does not arrange the entries according to the year of death nor in alphabetical order, instead he arranged them according to the teachers they studied with. Hence, the first generation is for his teachers who studied with his grandfather, Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar Maqbūl al-Ahdal (d. 1147/1734); the second generation for his teachers who studied with his maternal uncle, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umar Sharīf Maqbūl al-Ahdal (d. 1163/1749); and the third for his teachers who studied with his father, Sulaymān b. Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar al-Ahdal (d. 1197/1782); and finally, the last category of his teachers is for a number of visiting scholars who taught in Zabīd (*ṭabaqat al-wāfīdīn*). Among this latter category we find the name of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī who also studied with the author’s grandfather and maternal uncle.

Some biographical dictionaries are concerned with the ‘*ulamā*’ of a particular place or city for a specific period, such as Muḥammad Zabārah’s (d. 1381/1961) *Attainment of Purpose* from biographical notices of the Yemeni scholars in the thirteenth century A.H.; Muḥammad Muṭī‘ al-Hāfiẓ’s *History of Damascene Scholars* in the fourteenth century A.H.; and Muḥammad at-Tunjī’s edition of the *Biographical Notices of Notables of Medina* in the twelfth century A.H. by an unknown author.⁵

Another variety of biographical dictionaries gather reports on ‘*ulamā*’ from two or more consecutive centuries such as Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī’s (d. 1342/1924) *Pungent Musk* in the diffusion of traits of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.H.; Muḥammad ash-Shawkānī’s (d. 1250/1834) *Rising Full Moon on the Charming Qualities* of those after

the seventh century A.H.; ‘Abd Allāh al-Mu‘allimī’s compilation of learned scholars of Mecca from the ninth till the fourteenth century A.H.; and Muḥammad al-Hilāh’s compilation on the *History and Historians of Mecca* from the third till the thirteenth century A.H.⁶

The Significance of Authentic Tradition (*Isnād*)

Further categories of sources utilised for this study are the collections of *isnād* representing the chains of teacher-disciple links along which scholarly texts were transmitted and handed down.⁷ *Isnād* is also defined as the sequence of transmitters for a *ḥadīth* (prophetic tradition) or a specific work or body of work e.g., ‘so and so narrated to me that so and so ... etc. ... that so and so heard the Prophet SAW say the following ... etc.’. Some authors of *isnād* works provide useful details including not only the names of their teachers but also where they met with them, the works they studied with them, the *ijāzah* (permission or authorisation granted by a teacher to his student to narrate a *ḥadīth* or a specific work or body of work, whether written or verbally, and occasionally by way of correspondence), together with the full *isnāds* for these works. Occasionally, they also provide important dates such as the year they met these teachers, the year they travelled to acquire a particular work or hear a *ḥadīth*, the year of death of a teacher, etc. As for ‘*ulamā*’ who have come to hold a central position in intellectual scholarly networks, such works constitute a rich source for our knowledge of historical and social aspects of that period.

This is definitely true of the *isnād* works of the twelfth A.H. (eighteenth A.D.) century ‘*ulamā*’ such as Muḥammad Murtaḍā az-Zabīdī’s (d. 1205/1790) *al-Mu‘jam al-Mukhtaṣṣ*, a comprehensive biographical dictionary of over six hundred noted scholars from the twelfth century A.H. and his *Alfiyyat as-Sanad*, a work of more than one thousand and four hundred lines of rhymed prose containing the names of the author’s teachers and their teachers; Aḥmad al-‘Aṭṭār’s (d. 1218/1803) *Thabat*, containing a list of al-‘Aṭṭār’s teachers, and a collection of his *isnāds* by his student ‘Abd ar-Raḥman al-Kuzbarī (d. 1262/1845) entitled

Intikhāb al-‘Awālī; and Muḥammad as-Saffārīnī’s (d. 1188/1774) list of his teachers as well as his *ijāzah* to a group of notable scholars of his time. These three authors turned out to have been teachers of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī and none of them were mentioned as al-Falimbānī’s teachers by modern scholars, including Azra.

Within this category we should also include the works from the ‘*ulamā*’ of later generations such as Ibn ‘Ābidīn’s (d. 1252/1836) ‘*Uqūd al-La’ālī*’, containing a list of his own high *isnāds*; ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Kuzbarī’s *Thabat*, a list of his prominent teachers and their *isnāds*; Muḥammad Maḥfūẓ al-Jāwī at-Tarmasī’s (d. 1338/1920) *Kifāyat al-Mustafīd*, on his elevated chains of transmission; ‘Aydārūs al-Ḥabshī’s (d. 1314/1896) ‘*Iqd al-Yawāqīt al-Jawhariyyah*’ in which he lists numerous *isnāds* that link him to the al-‘Alawiyyah masters (Sayyids), and his ‘*Uqūd al-La’āl*’ on the chains of transmission of the men of *ḥadīth* narration; and more recently ‘Abd Allāh Ghāzī’s (d. 1365/1945) compilation of the *isnāds* of his teacher, Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī⁸ (d. 1330/1911) entitled *Faṭḥ al-Qawī*. These, to name a few, are important sources relevant to ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī’s disciples and contemporaries.

Finally one should also highlight the works of the modern Indonesian traditionalist scholar, Shaykh Muḥammad Yāsīn al-Fādānī (1335-1410/1916-90), who was born and lived in Mecca and enjoyed such great respect among traditionalist ‘*ulamā*’ as an *isnād* specialist that he was referred to as the *isnād*-expert of his time (*musnid al-‘aṣr*), *par excellence*. Some of his admirers even called him the greatest *isnād*-expert of the world (*musnid ad-dunyā*). He published a number of books on *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *uṣūl* (principles), *manṭiq* (logic), ‘*ilm al-falak*’ (astronomy), but was mostly renowned for his significantly numerous books on *isnād*.⁹ These include his *al-Iqd al-Farīd*, a gleanings of *isnād* from his longer *Bughyat al-Murīd*; *Tanwīr al-Baṣīrah*, enumerating his *isnāds* for twenty-three renowned *isnād* works of his predecessors; *al-Arba‘ūn al-Buldāniyyah*, enumerating his teachers in forty different cities of the Islamic world; and *Waraqāt*, furnishing his *isnād* for sixteen of *al-ḥadīth al-musalsal* (that is, *ḥadīth* all of whose narrators are in the chain of transmission up to the Prophet SAW and fulfil the conditions of trustworthiness at the time of narration from the viewpoint of sound character and speech); and his *al-awā’il* (i.e. his *isnād* for the first *ḥadīth*

narrated in the major thirteen *ḥadīth* books). These works have proved crucial because they supply a large number of *isnāds* of ‘ulamā’ of *Jāwī* origin, including that of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself and his students.

Al-Fādānī is also reported to have written and compiled a large book on *isnād* in four volumes entitled *Bughyat al-Murīd*, but this has never been published and probably is still in its manuscript form as modern traditionalist scholars repeatedly refer to this work and report that it remains unpublished.¹⁰

Al-Fādānī’s disciples have subsequently made extensive use of his works, extracting particular categories of *isnād* and providing biographical notices of his teachers. For example, the Egyptian Maḥmūd Sa‘īd Mamdūḥ of Cairo in his *I’lām al-Qāṣī wa ‘d-Dānī*, focuses on some of al-Fādānī’s earliest and high chains of transmission; and in his *Tashnīf al-Asmā’*, he highlights a number of al-Fādānī’s prominent teachers (two hundred and thirty to be precise) and provides biographical reports on those from whom he learnt and received his authorisations; and al-Fādānī’s Indonesian disciple, Muḥammad Mukhtār ad-Dīn al-Falimbānī al-Indūnīsī al-Makkī (d. 1411/1991), in his *Bulūḡh al-Amānī*. Apparently this work was written in nine parts as the author himself in his prologue describes the content of each part: the first, on al-Fādānī’s scholarship and list of his notable teachers; the second, on the list of circulated *thabat* (works which compile the list of teachers with whom the compiler studied) and al-Fādānī’s *isnād* on these works; the third, on al-Fādānī’s *isnād* on forty *ḥadīth* books together with his *isnād* for each of the first *ḥadīths* of these books; the fourth, on al-Fādānī’s *isnād* on other *ḥadīth* books that were not included in the previous forty books and his *isnād* on other books of Islamic sciences; the fifth, al-Fādānī’s *isnād* on *al-ḥadīth al-musalsal* (continuous chain of *ḥadīth*); the sixth, al-Fādānī’s *isnād* on forty *ḥadīth* from forty teachers from forty books; the seventh, on al-Fādānī’s *isnād* from forty towns (forty *ḥadīth* from forty teachers from forty cities); the eighth, on the texts of *ijāzāt* that al-Fādānī received written by his teachers as well as their texts of *ijāzāt* written for his four children; the ninth and the last, contains concise biographical notices of some of his teachers.¹¹

However, I have only been able to locate the first and third parts, and probably most of the rest have not been published as Yūsuf al-Mar‘ashlī points out that only three parts have been printed.¹²

Despite his esteemed position, some of al-Fādānī’s works have to be treated cautiously – as pointed out by Martin van Bruinessen, due to some obvious mistakes in the dates he provides and that some *isnāds* do not link the teacher-student chain as the latter was born decades or years after the death of the former.¹³ This is perhaps due to errors by copyists of his works, possibly among his students or the publisher who unintentionally dropped some of the narrators from the *isnād* causing the gap between the teacher-student link. This is plausible when we see that this kind of mistake only occurs in his publications which have not been critically edited (*muḥaqqaq*).¹⁴

Apart from his works on *isnād*, al-Fādānī is also reported to have written biographical dictionaries focusing more specifically on *Jāwī ‘ulamā’* probably including two books entitled *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi‘iyyah aṣ-Ṣughrā* and *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi‘iyyah al-Kubrā*. However these works have not been published or located.¹⁵

It is important to mention that the *isnāds* of the *Jāwī ‘ulamā’*, including those of ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself and his students, were not only in circulation among Indonesian traditionalist scholars but also among Arab scholars. For instance, the modern Syrian traditionalist scholar, ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (d. 1417/1996 in Riyadh) of Aleppo in his *Imdād al-Fattāḥ* reported that he narrated the famous *isnād* work of the Meccan *muḥaddith* ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī (d. 1134/1721) entitled *al-Imdād bi-Ma‘rifat ‘Uluw al-Isnād* from his three Arab teachers: Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Shākir (d. 1377/1957), Aḥmad b. aṣ-Ṣiddīq al-Ghumārī (d. 1380/1960), and Muḥammad at-Tījānī al-Miṣrī (d. 1398/1977). All of his teachers studied this work with ‘Abd as-Sattār b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bakrī ad-Dihlawī al-Makkī (d. 1355/1936), who in turn received it from Nawawī b. ‘Umar al-Bantanī al-Jāwī al-Makkī (d. 1314/1896), who received it from ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad b. ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Falimbānī, and so forth up to the author al-Baṣrī.¹⁶

Thus, analysing such works on *isnād* is crucial to this study as it does not only provide us with information on ‘ulamā’ of *Jāwī* origin in

general but more pertinently on ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself, his teachers, his contemporaries and his students.

It is important to point out that the works on *isnād* have received special attention from scholars in the past and present alike. This is due to the importance of the *isnād* itself in Islamic learning, in that it was regarded by Muslim predecessors (*salaf*) as the first and primary condition for relating any aspect of the Islamic traditions, even if it was merely relating one word. Muslim scholars have always considered this as the means by which God Most High fulfilled his promise of preserving the Religion which includes the Qur’ān, the *Sunnah* (Prophetic traditions) and the various Islamic religious and philological sciences that are indispensable for understanding the former two.

The importance of *isnād* as a scholarly authority and means of authentication is reflected in the attention it received from early scholars such as the Iraqi scholar of Kūfah, Sufyān ath-Thawrī (d. 161/778) who said: “The *isnād* is a weapon of the believer. When one does not possess a weapon, then with what will he combat?” The Khorasani scholar, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), once said: “The *isnād* is part of the religion: had it not been for the *isnād*, whoever wished would have said whatever he liked,” and he also said: “The one who seeks matters of his religion without an *isnād* is similar to the one who tries to climb to the roof without a ladder.” A generation later, ash-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/820) is also reported to have said: “The example of the one who seeks *ḥadīth* without an *isnād* is of a person who gathers wood in the night who carries a bundle of sticks not knowing that there might be a snake in it.”¹⁷ By this he means that such a person would be collecting all types of narrations, the genuine and spurious without knowing it.

Because of this strict methodology, early Muslim scholars examined and analysed each and every statement that came to them, whether it was the statement of the Messenger of God, his companions or anyone else, as well as the reliability of the individual narrators who were named in the *isnād*. They studied the life and character of those who were part of the transmitting chain (*isnād*) in the strictest way possible. Hence, the *Ummah* witnessed the introduction of specialized biographical studies in the ‘science of studying the reporters of *ḥadīth*’ known as *‘Ilm ar-rijāl* (The science of narrators) or *‘Ilm al-jarḥ wa ‘l-ta’dīl* (The

science of impugnment and validation), which was unprecedented and remains unrivalled till today. In these works, information on thousands of narrators: their names, genealogical lineages, lifetimes, their date of birth, date of demise, their character, qualities and circumstances of reception and transmission of *ḥadīth*, as well as their subject, with the aim of determining how trustworthy each narrator was and, hence is, indispensable when distinguishing authentic from suspicious or fabricated traditions.

This history of narrators' criticism was exemplified by such classics as Yahyā b. Ma'īn's (d. 233/847) *at-Tārīkh* and *min Kalām Ibn Ma'īn*; 'Alī b. al-Madīnī's (d. 234/848) *Su'ālāt Ibn al-Madīnī fī 'l-Jarḥ wa 't-Ta'dīl*; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's (d. 241/855) *al-'Ilal wa-Ma'rifat ar-Rijāl*; al-Bukhārī's (d. 256/869) *aḍ-Ḍu'afā' aṣ-Ṣaghūr*; *at-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*; and *at-Tārīkh aṣ-Ṣaghūr*; and an-Nasā'ī (d. 303/915) *Kitāb aḍ-Ḍu'afā' wa 'l-Matrūkīn*.

This was followed by Ibn Abī Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (d. 327/938) who was one of the most prominent exponents and practitioners of *ḥadīth* criticism and his works *al-'Ilal* and *Kitāb al-Jarḥ wa 't-Ta'dīl*, comprising mainly evaluations from Abū Zur'ah al-Rāzī (d. 264/878) and his own father, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 277/890), are principal works in this field. Then comes Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bastī's (d. 354/965) *Kitāb al-Majrūlūn min 'l-Muḥaddithīn wa 'ḍ-Ḍu'afā' wa 'l-Matrūkīn* and his *ath-Thiqāt*; Ibn 'Adī's (d. 365/975) *al-Kāmil fī Ḍu'afā' ar-Rijāl*; and ad-Dāraquṭnī's (d. 385/995) *aḍ-Ḍu'afā' wa 'l-Matrūkūn*.

Such scholarly works have since continued in a distinguished series of comprehensive compilations during the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries of the Hijri, and books such as Ibn al-Jawzī's (d. 597/1200) *Kitāb aḍ-Ḍu'afā' wa 'l-Matrūkīn*; al-Maqdisī's (d. 600/1203) *al-Kamāl fī Asmā' ar-Rijāl*, al-Mizzī's (d. 742/1341) *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' ar-Rijāl*, adh-Dhahabī's (d. 748/1348) *Mīzān al-'Itidāl* and *al-Mughnī fī 'ḍ-Ḍu'afā'*, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī's (d. 852/1448) *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* and *Lisān al-Mīzān* are all outstanding examples of this amazing phenomenon.

In the later Islamic centuries after the ninth A.H./fifteenth A.D century, less focus, specifically on *Ilm ar-rijāl* or *Ilm al-jarḥ wa 't-ta'dīl*, seems to become the norm, especially during the period under study, as no

new works on narrators' criticism, to my knowledge, were ever written. This probably was an indirect result of the end of '*aṣr at-tadwīn* (the classical Islamic 'age of establishing classics,' during which the primary works of *ḥadīth*, jurisprudence and theology were composed). As all the major Islamic religious sciences, especially the Prophetic *ḥadīth*, were distinguished from unacceptable traditions and recorded in numerous *ḥadīth* books such as *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and of Muslim, the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah, and *al-Jāmi'* of at-Tirmidhī, the necessity to study the life and character of those who were in the later part of the *isnād* after these is no longer deemed significant.

The Preservation of Tradition

However, traditional scholars maintained and continued to narrate *ḥadīth* and transmit any religious work or text with their *isnāds*. This perhaps is not just to have the pride of possessing a continuous *isnād* to the Prophet SAW or to the author of a specific work, but also to prove their authority in transmitting them, as such *isnād* reveals their teachers, especially if they are esteemed scholars of their time, and the works they studied with them and their successive links to their predecessors (*salaf*). Probably the most important purpose of narrating works with *isnād* among scholars in the later Islamic centuries is to preserve this tradition itself. In this respect, Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ ash-Shahrazūrī (d. 643/1245) is reported to have said: "the narration of traditions with continuous *isnād* in our time or even the time before us is not meant to prove authenticity of what was narrated as such *isnād* is not free from a shaykh who does not know what he narrates ... rather the purpose is to preserve the *isnād* tradition itself, a favour which God had bestowed upon this *Ummah*."¹⁸

Another branch of knowledge which also developed simultaneously in connection with the study of *ḥadīth* was the compilation of genealogies of *isnād* of individual scholars. Many scholars compiled such *isnāds* in separate works. In the early period of Islam the '*ulamā*' designated the term *al-Mashyakhah* or *al-Mashīkhah* (pl. *al-Mashīkhāt*) on the section of works where the *muḥaddith* (scholar of *ḥadīth*) would compile the list of his teachers and his narrations from them. Later on, when the names of

teachers were extracted from the original work to form a separate work which were rearranged alphabetically (*murattab* 'alā ḥurūf al-mu'jam), the term *al-Mu'jam* (pl. *al-Ma'ājim*), that is dictionary became more common. At the same time among the Muslims of al-Andalus (Islamic Spain) and the Maghrib, the term *al-Barnāmiḥ* (pl. *al-Barāmiḥ*) was used for these works. In the Eastern Islamic world a new terminology was later used to describe such works, namely *ath-Thabat* (pl. *al-Athbāt*), while in the western parts of the Islamic world the name *al-Fahras* or *al-Fahrasah* (pl. *al-Fahāris* or *al-Fahrasāt*) had been used.¹⁹

As a result of the 'ulamā's keen interest in *isnād* and their accomplishment in preserving this tradition, hundreds of such works have been written and handed down for generations. This tradition continues up to the present day especially among modern traditionalist scholars. They still record their names and their teachers in addition to the existing *isnād* and so forth to the compiler or author of a particular *thabat* or other works on Islamic religious sciences, especially that of the *ḥadīth* works such as the six-canonical books. They usually give a title to their new work, which in many cases rhymes with the name of the compiler or the description of the contents. It is on such works that the 'ulamā' often grant a written *ijāzah* to their disciples or upon request to their peers.

The range of titles given to the works of *isnād* by the authors do not merely concern rhymed words but also in most cases indicate the contents of their works. This can be observed in numerous titles such as al-Kuzbarī's *Intikhāb al-'Awālī wa 'sh-Shuyūkh al-Akhyār min Fahāris Shaykhinā al-Imām al-Musnid al-'Aṭṭār*. This is not just simply to make the word *al-Akhyār* rhyme with *al-'Aṭṭār* but also to tell us that this work is a meticulous selection of the highly ranked and the excellent teachers of al-'Aṭṭār; Murtaḍā az-Zabīdī's *Alfiyyat as-Sanad*, indicates that the author versifies over one thousand lines of rhymed prose containing the names of his teachers either by way of direct attendance of their teaching sessions (*samā'*), or by way of correspondence (*murāsalah* or *mukātabah*), and their teachers. For example, al-Baṣrī's *al-Imdād bi-Ma'rifat 'Uluw al-Isnād*, Ibn al-Mayyit's (d. 1140/1727) *al-Jawāhir al-Ghawālī fī Bayān al-Asānīd al-'Awālī*, and al-Ḥabshī's *Uqūd al-La'āl fī Asānīd ar-Rijāl* do not only concern internal rhyming of the words *al-Imdād* with *al-Isnād*,

al-Ghawālī with *al-‘Awālī*, and *al-La’āl* with *ar-Rijāl*, but significantly tell us that the contents of such *thabats* are the highly narrated *isnāds* that the authors have accumulated.

Among the benefits of knowing a number of *thabat* works and numerous *isnāds* of a scholar is that from them we can learn his different *turuq* (routes) of acquiring a particular *ḥadīth* or work, his teachers, and their works which might not be found listed elsewhere. It is also from these *thabat* works that we can learn whether he studied and acquired a particular work from his teacher by way of reading with him (*qirā’ah*), one of the means of receiving traditions, whereby the student would read out his teacher’s tradition back to him for verification, or by way of direct attendance of their teaching sessions (*samā’*), in which the student would hear the tradition and subsequently learn it by heart or from a book, or by way of authorisation (*ijāzah*), and whether this authorisation is specific (*ijāzah khāṣṣah*) or general (*ijāzah ‘āmmah*).²⁰

With the evolution of *isnād* tradition from the early centuries several terminologies consequently developed, such as the term ‘*al-isnād al-‘ālī*,’ which means that the *ḥadīth* is narrated with a short chain of transmission (as opposed to ‘*al-isnād an-nāzil*,’ i.e. narrated with a longer chain of transmission) began to make their appearance. This does not mean the having abbreviated *isnād* but rather that the last narrator had made the effort to meet with senior scholars from the earlier generations. In their *ḥadīth* studies, the *muḥaddithūn* and the ‘*ulamā*’ naturally preferred what these scholars called the ‘high *isnāds*’ or the ‘superior *isnāds*’ (‘*uluw al-isnād*’ or *al-isnād al-‘ālī*) to what was called *al-isnād an-nāzil* (lesser *isnāds*).

In this respect, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) said: “Seeking *al-isnād al-‘ālī* is the way of the predecessors [*as-salaf*]”; and Ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ ash-Shahrazūrī is reported to have said: “To seek the superiority of *isnād* is *sunnah* [to follow the trodden path], hence travel to attain it is recommended.”²¹

The benefit of possessing such ‘*uluw*’ is that it distances the *isnād* from defect and flaw as every single narrator in the chain is prone to make mistakes intentionally or unintentionally, thus, fewer narrators result in a lesser probability of defect and vice versa. The ‘*uluw*’ in *ḥadīth* narration which the ‘*ulamā*’ seek is divided into five parts: the first, closeness

in time to the Prophet SAW by way of a clean (*naẓīf*) and not a weak (*ḍaʿīf*) *isnād*, and this is the loftiest kind of *ʿuluw*. On this, Muḥammad b. Aslam at-Ṭūsī az-Zāhid (d. 242/856) commented: “the closeness of *isnād* is closeness to God.” The second, closeness to a particular reliable scholar of *ḥadīth*, regardless of the number of intermediaries to the Prophet SAW; the third, *ʿuluw* in regard to narration of the two books of al-Bukhārī and Muslim (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn*) or either one of them, or other known reliable books of *ḥadīth*; the fourth, *ʿuluw* achieved from the late demise of a narrator, i.e. in addition to narrating from his teacher a disciple can narrate directly from his teacher’s teacher if the latter lived long and the disciple met him; and the fifth, *ʿuluw*, obtained from early audience of a narrator, i.e. a student who attended sessions with a teacher at a very young age will transcend his contemporaries on his *isnād*.²²

Though *al-isnād al-ʿālī* in comparison to *al-isnād an-nāzil* is highly sought after, especially by the *muḥaddithūn*, because of the closeness to the Prophet SAW and as a precautionary measure against defects. Some scholars also seek after *al-isnād an-nāzil*, particularly among the *Ṣūfīs*. To them the quest for *al-isnād an-nāzil* is equally important to *al-isnād al-ʿālī* as such *isnād* includes more scholars or spiritual masters in its chain, hence, anticipating more *barakah* (blessing) from these scholars.²³

Another reason for giving preference to *al-isnād an-nāzil* over *al-isnād al-ʿālī* is that such *isnād* contains *thiqah* (trustworthy) narrators while on the contrary the latter contains *ḍaʿīf* (weak) narrators. In this connection, the *ḥadīth* Master Shams ad-Dīn Ibn Nāṣir ad-Dīn ad-Dimashqī (d. 842/1438) relates in his rhyming poem “*idhā aḥbabta takhrīj al-ʿawālī, ʿan ʿr-rāwīna ḥaqqiq mā aqūlu/muzūlun ʿan thiqātihimu ʿuluwun, ʿuluwun ʿan ḍiʿāfihimu muzūlun*” (if you wish to extract the supreme *isnād* from the narrators, ascertain what I say, *muzūl* from trustworthy narrators is *uluw*, and *uluw* from weak narrators is *muzūl*).²⁴

Occasionally preference is also given to *al-isnād an-nāzil* because of the *laṭāfah* (delicateness) it sometimes possess. For instance, on al-Fādānī’s *isnād* for *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the famous collection of authentic *ḥadīth*, he transmitted this work highly from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUbayd Allāh as-Saqqāf, who transmitted it from ʿAydārūs b. ʿUmar al-Ḥabshī, who transmitted it [by way of general *ijāzah*]²⁵ from ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān

b. Sulaymān al-Ahdal, who also transmitted it by way of general *ijāzah* from Muḥammad b. Sinnah al-Fullānī, who transmitted it from Aḥmad al-‘Ajil, and so forth up to al-Bukhārī himself. In this case there are eleven intermediaries between al-Fādānī and al-Bukhārī.

At the same time he also transmitted this work with *al-isnād an-nāzil* from his *Jāwī* teacher Jam‘ān b. Sāmūn al-Jāwī at-Tanqarānī (d. 1381/1962), who transmitted it from Nawawī b. ‘Umar al-Jāwī al-Bantanī, who in turn transmitted it from his teacher al-‘Allāmah ash-Shaykh ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad b. ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Jāwī al-Falimbānī, who transmitted it from ‘Āqib b. Ḥasan ad-Dīn al-Jāwī al-Falimbānī al-Madanī, who transmitted it from al-‘Ārif Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm as-Sammān al-Madanī, who transmitted it from Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Kurdī al-Madanī, who transmitted it from Muḥammad Sa‘īd b. Muḥammad Sunbul al-Ḥanafī, who transmitted it from Aḥmad an-Nakhlī al-Makkī, who transmitted it from Aḥmad al-Qushāshī al-Madanī, and so forth to al-Bukhārī. Here we have sixteen intermediaries between al-Fādānī and al-Bukhārī. In this case there are at least three prominent *Ṣūfī* shaykhs within the *isnād*. This is also true for al-Fādānī’s *isnād* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Muslim’s collection of authentic *ḥadīth*, which he transmitted both with *al-isnād al-‘ālī* and *al-isnād an-nāzil* having fourteen and nineteen intermediaries between him and Muslim respectively.²⁶

Though al-Fādānī begins with his *al-isnād al-‘ālī* for both works, he still includes his *al-isnād an-nāzil* successively because of its special nature. The names in this *isnād* from Jam‘ān up to ‘Āqib are all *Jāwī ‘ulamā’*, so including al-Fādānī himself, five generations of *Jāwī* scholars. This apparently demonstrates his sense of pride in narrating with *al-isnād an-nāzil* as it indicates that the *Jāwī ‘ulamā’* are also on par with their Arab peers in terms of Islamic erudition, especially in *ḥadīth* transmission. In addition, all four *Jāwī* scholars included in this *isnād* were described as *al-mu‘ammar* (long-lived).²⁷ Also, as indicated above, his *al-isnād an-nāzil* includes several *Ṣūfī* shaykhs, which adds uniqueness to such *isnād*. ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself appears as a prominent link in al-Fādānī’s *isnād*.

Manuscript Catalogues and Additional Sources

Another category of sources consulted for this study consists of catalogues of Arabic and Oriental manuscripts, as they often contain important information on those '*ulamā*' who have written books. This is particularly very useful in tracing and tracking down the writings of 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī, especially those that have never been consulted by contemporary scholars in their studies. These titles will be discussed further in the chapter on al-Falimbānī's writings.

Works of contemporaneous '*ulamā*' to 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī have also been included as a supplementary category of sources. These literatures have proved beneficial as they provide additional information on the '*ulamā*' and the religious milieu, socio-moral characteristics of his period, as well as the teacher-student nexus.

Last but not least, the writings of contemporary scholars are also important for this study. These comprise literatures written both in Malay and English dealing with aspects relevant to the topic of study and will be discussed further in the literature review.

This study – to my knowledge – is the first to have comprehensively utilised the widest possible range of sources available, encompassing manuscripts, *Jāwī* books, Arabic biographical dictionaries and other literatures, as well as studies in Malay and English that are relevant to al-Falimbānī.

The Connections Between the Malay Archipelago and the Arab World

The coming of Islam to the Malay Archipelago has long attracted the attention of modern scholars. Though it is not precisely known when Islam was first introduced to the Archipelago, it is generally accepted among historians that Islam began to flourish in the Archipelago from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries. This is based on several types of evidence; a report by the Venetian traveller Marco Polo (1254-1324) who observed that Perlak (Northern Sumatra) was already a Muslim

kingdom when he visited the region on his way home from China in 1292; the discovery of the gravestone of Sulṭān al-Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ (dated 696/1297), identified him as the first Muslim ruler of Samudra (situated on the northern coast of Sumatra); and finally, Ibn Battuta (1304-1377) a Moroccan traveller, who during his eastern travels from 1325 to 1354, observed Islamic centres were yet surrounded by unconverted kingdoms and found that the ruler of Samudra was a follower of the Shāfi‘ī School of Islamic jurisprudence.²⁸

However, this perception and observation can still be contested. The hypothesis based on Marco Polo’s observation does not necessarily prove that Islam only existed or penetrated in the thirteenth century as it is very likely that it had arrived at least a century or centuries earlier. All that his evidence can prove is that an Islamic kingdom was already established before his arrival in the region in 1292. At the same time, the conjectures that the gravestone was of ‘the first Muslim ruler’ can be modified. The epitaph on the gravestone only reads as follows: “this is the grave of him to whom God may grant mercy and forgiveness, the pious, the counsel for righteousness, the noble in rank and ancestry, the magnanimous, the devout in worship, the conqueror, known as Sulṭān [al-]Malik aṣ-Ṣāliḥ.”²⁹ This by itself does not confirm that he was the first; only that he is the *first known* Muslim ruler.

From a different perspective, the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* collection of authentic *ḥadīths*, the most famous of the six canonical books on the Prophetic Traditions, according to Yāsīn al-Fādānī was first brought and introduced to the Island of Java in 671/1272 by Sharīf Hidāyat Allāh b. Aḥmad Jalāl Shāh b. ‘Abd Allāh Khān who migrated and died in Java and was later buried at Gunung Jati in Cirebon. He was reported to have brought the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from the *al-Ḥaramayn* (the two sanctuaries, Mecca and Medina).³⁰ Whereas in the Island of Sumatra, probably in Palembang, the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, according to al-Fādānī, was only introduced in 891/1486 by Sulṭān Maṇṣūr b. Kiyai Gading, the progenitor of the Palembang rulers.³¹

This strongly implies that Islam must have been established in some parts of the Archipelago, namely Java, prior to these dates as there were already devout Muslims who strived to study the basics of the new religion to an extent that they were already at a stage qualified to acquire

advanced knowledge. It can also be observed that what al-Fādānī reports shows that Islam had already circulated in the Archipelago before the Western traveller's observation was recorded.

Furthermore, according to the modern Arab historian, Muḥammad al-ʿAydārūs, the western hypothesis on the coming of Islam to Southeast Asia from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries suffers several weaknesses. It is known from the works of Islamic historians such as Muḥammad b. Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī's (d. 310/923) *Tārīkh aṭ-Ṭabarī* and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī's (d. 463/1070) *Tārīkh Baghdād* that some of the *Ashrāf* (nobles, referring commonly to the descendents of The Prophet SAW) migrated from al-Baṣrah to Medina thence to Hadramawt. For instance, Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā better known as al-Muhājir (d. 345/956), the great great grandson of Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, grandson of The Prophet SAW, migrated from al-Baṣrah to Medina in 317/929. After staying for a year, he went to Mecca for the pilgrimage and thence migrated to Hadramawt in 318/930. His first descendent born in Hadramawt was his grandson ʿAlawī b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Muhājir; hence the name al-ʿAlawiyyūn or Bā-ʿAlawī was ascribed to the Sayyids of Hadramawt.³²

It was his descendents, the al-ʿAlawiyyūn according to al-ʿAydārūs, who later migrated to the Indian coasts and settled there as early as the tenth century. Thus, for instance, the savant (*al-ʿālim*) ash-Sharīf ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Bā-Faqīh migrated to Cannanore, Southern India and was later married to the daughter of the local minister ʿAbd al-Wahhāb who appointed him as his assistant until his death. Another renowned scholar, ash-Sharīf Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs migrated to Ahmadabad and Surat, a port city in the Indian state of Gujarat, upon the request of his grandfather ash-Sharīf Shaykh b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs (d. 379/990), and assumed his grandfather's position until he died in Surat in 393/1003.³³

This migration is evident in Arabic biographical dictionaries such as ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī's *al-Iʿlām bi-man fī Tārīkh al-Hind min ʿIʿlām*.³⁴ Though certain Arab family identities dissolved in their adopted community, other Arab Diaspora remained well-known in India and Southeast Asia and retained their Arabic ancestries to the present such as the family of al-Ḥaddād, al-ʿAṭṭās, al-Ḥabshī, al-ʿAydārūs, as-Saqqāf, al-Jufri, al-Ḥāmid, al-Mahdalī, ash-Shāṭirī, al-Kāf, al-Bār, etc.

Another reason for confusion among Western scholars is their observation that the propagators of Islam in the Archipelago seemingly arrived from India. They did not comprehend that in the olden days it was extremely difficult if not impossible, for the sailing vessels to sail directly from Hadramawt to the Archipelago without stopping at the coastal cities of India thence to Southeast Asia. If we observe the Muslims in India they are the adherents of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, while the Muslims of Southeast Asia are adherents to the Shāfi‘iyyah school, the *madhhab* of the *Ashrāf* of Hadramawt.³⁵ This seems to indicate strong evidence that the *Ashrāf*, whether those who had settled in India or came from Hadramawt through the ports of India, were in fact the early propagators of Islam in the Archipelago. Hence, the generally accepted conjecture that Islam only flourished in the Archipelago from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries still leaves room for further discussion and should be tackled from a new perspective that needs to be taken seriously.

Similarly, as it was in the case of the introduction of Islam, it is also not clear as to when contacts between the Malay Archipelago and the Arab countries of Islam were first established. Apparently, people from the Archipelago did not merely receive Islam but also reacted to it and attempted to search out every aspect of its teachings for themselves. They went to the central lands of Islam and then returned to their homeland to teach their own people. This is apparent from the travels of some known figures in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such as Ḥamzah al-Fanṣūrī, though his dates of travel are unknown and perhaps it was during the second half of the sixteenth century. He was reported to have visited Barus (northwestern coast of Sumatra), Kedah, Pahang, Bantam and Kudus in Java, Siam, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Baghdad. Shams ad-Dīn as-Sumaṭrānī, who from his eloquent Arabic works we can conclude that probably he too must have also travelled to centres of traditional Islamic learning, especially to *al-Ḥaramayn*; and later ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf as-Sinkīlī who spent about nineteen years studying in ad-Dawḥah (Doha, Qatar), al-Mokha (Mocha), Zabīd, Bayt al-Faqīh (all three cities in Yemen), Mecca, Medina and Jeddah probably from 1052/1642 until 1072/1661 when he finally returned to Aceh.³⁶

Though it was not until the late sixteenth century that such travellers played important roles in the great blossoming of Islamic learning in

the port city of Aceh, it is more than likely that there were many more unrecorded travels and unknown scholars who went far afield in the quest for a deeper knowledge of the traditions of Islam.

Furthermore, there is always the pilgrimage (*hajj*) which constitutes the fifth of the five pillars of Islam that form the framework of Islamic life. All Muslims who are physically and financially able have an obligation to perform the *hajj* at least once in a lifetime. Though again, there is no record or evidence as to when, how or who was the first to embark from the Archipelago to perform the *hajj*. Certainly this religious obligation must have inspired some, if not many to journey to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, hence establishing contacts between the Malay Archipelago and these Islamic centres.

The continuous trade between the Mughal Empire which ruled most of the Indian subcontinent from the early sixteenth to the mid nineteenth centuries, and countries of Islamic West Asia, the Malay Archipelago and China, without doubt must have assisted and contributed to the development of Islam, as the trade routes were the arteries for the expanding Muslim community in the Archipelago. Though it remains a question and mere conjecture whether the Arabs settled to form resident trading communities in the Archipelago as they did elsewhere, it is probable that they did settle down in at least some of the trading ports of Southeast Asia. Indeed, if we take into account that the Arab colonies were already firmly established in Chinese ports, particularly Canton (Khan-fu), by the middle of the eight century and by the middle of the ninth when full descriptions of them can be observed from Arabic sources, it is of tolerable certainty that they must have also established their commercial settlements on some of the islands of the Archipelago.³⁷

Unfortunately the history of Islam in the Archipelago in the early centuries is difficult to study due to the serious shortage of primary sources, while for the later periods not all materials have been examined. Nevertheless, the outlines of the networks connecting '*ulamā*' in the Hījāz with Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century were first sketched by Anthony H. Johns in a number of studies.³⁸

Without doubt there is a serious shortage of primary sources originating from the Archipelago itself for the study of Islam in this region. If we analyse from a different perspective, none of the well

surviving primary sources from the Arab regions or even India for the early history of Islam have ever provided us with any accounts related to the travels or contacts of *Jāwī* scholars or students with these centres to the west of the Archipelago. As Johns points out, it was not until the late sixteenth century that great *Jāwī* travellers contributing to the spread of Islamic teachings, especially in the port city of Aceh, can be observed. Hence, it is highly plausible if we conclude that from the early stage of the rise of Islam up to the fifteenth century, the people from the Archipelago had to rely heavily on Arab and Indian Muslim travellers to learn every aspect of the Islamic teachings. This is apparent as there is no such records of *Jāwī* student travels either from the Archipelago itself or from any Islamic kingdom in India or in any of the Islamic centres of the Arab world, especially the *al-Ḥaramayn*, to prove early scholarship of *Jāwī* students.

Furthermore, the mention of *Jāwī* students – known in the Arab world as ‘*Aṣḥāb al-Jāwīyyīn*’ (fellow *Jāwī* students) or ‘*Jamā‘at min ‘l-Jāwīyyīn*’ (community of *Jāwī* students) as well as their place of origin, ‘*Bilād al-Jāwah*’ (the Malay world) in Arabic sources and works – only began to make their appearance in the early seventeenth century.³⁹ The extensive contacts between *Jāwī* students and their teachers in the Arab world, particularly *al-Ḥaramayn* during this time is probably best reflected in several works of the Medinian scholar, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (1025-1101/1616-90), who not only mentioned the *Jāwī* community and *Bilād al-Jāwah* in his writings, but also paid special attention to the religious issues arising back in the Archipelago. He is also reported to have written a treatise specifically for his *Jāwī* students entitled *al-Jawābāt al-Gharāwīyyah ‘an ‘l-Masā’il al-Jāwīyyah al-Jahriyyah*.⁴⁰ Another renowned Meccan scholar who was also a *qāḍī* (judge) of the holy city, Tāj ad-Dīn b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm (d. 1066/1655), better known as Ibn Ya‘qūb, also wrote a work in order to meet the religious needs of his *Jāwī* students. His work entitled *al-Jāddat al-Qawīmah ilā Taḥqīq Mas’alat al-Wujūd wa-Ta’alluq al-Qudrat al-Qadīmah fī ‘l-Jawāb ‘an ‘l-As’ilat al-Wāridah min Jāwah*, was probably to clarify the concept of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Oneness of Being) that has been misconceived and debated in the Archipelago.⁴¹ Azra asserts that this work was probably written upon the request of ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf al-Jāwī as-Sinkīlī as Ibn

Ya'qūb was included among the scholars who came in contact with him in Mecca.⁴²

Later in the eighteenth century, a leading *al-Ḥaramayn* scholar who was a *Ṣūfī* and the *muftī* of Medina, Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Kurdī (1127-94/1715-80) also wrote a treatise entitled *al-Durrat al-Bahiyyah fī Jawāb al-As'ilat al-Jāwīyyah*, specifically to provide answers to questions posed by his *Jāwī* students.⁴³ Among his *Jāwī* students, as we will see later was 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself. Although it is doubtful whether these three works are still available today unfortunately, as I have found no trace of them despite my attempts. Nevertheless, the fact that at least three works were devoted to questions by *Jāwī* students by leading '*ulamā'*' of *al-Ḥaramayn* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries substantiate the hypothesis that the extensive contacts and the intense intellectual discourse between *Jāwī* students and scholars of the centres of traditional Islamic learning were only established and intensified during this period.

In an article titled "Friends in grace: Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī and 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Singkeli,"⁴⁴ Johns points out that it was not until the late sixteenth century that individual names such as Ḥamzah al-Fanṣūrī and Shams ad-Dīn as-Sumaṭrānī, who played important roles in the great blossoming of Islamic learning in the port city of Aceh, can be observed. Despite being well known, there is yet another somewhat later figure in the seventeenth century, 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī (1024-1105/1615-1693), who is in a much better position historically as it is possible to document his relationship with two of his teachers in Medina. Not only their names: Aḥmad al-Qushāshī (d. 1071/1660) and the Kurdish born Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1101/1690) who later resided and died in Medina, are also known as well as something of their works and personalities.

Of them, as Johns argues, the greater, although the lesser known, was Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, a key figure in the network of teachers in the seventeenth century as well as an authority on the earlier tradition of Ibn al-'Arabī (562-638/1165-1240). At the request of his *Jāwī* student, probably 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī himself, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī wrote one of his most important single works, a commentary entitled *Ithāf adh-Dhakī* on *at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalah* by an Indian author, Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allāh al-Hindī al-Burhānpūrī (d. 1029/1620).⁴⁵

Though Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī is a neglected author, as Johns emphasized, he is of real importance for the understanding of Islam's taking root in Southeast Asia, and was the prime source of the intellectual life of Aceh in the seventeenth century. The influence of his personality, his learning and his special kind of piety is evident in his pupil and later colleague 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī. In fact, this picture of master and pupil has much wider implications; it is, after all, the first recorded example of such relationship between a *Jāwī* scholar – in this case an Achenese – and a West Asian Muslim scholar. Furthermore, it is the study of the work and thought of 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī which has drawn attention to Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī as one of the leading scholars of his age, and perhaps the great expositor of the *Ṣūfī* school of Ibn al-'Arabī.

Of equal significance is the fact that Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī wrote one of his most important works, the *Ithāf adh-Dhakī*, with a direct concern for the religious problems in Aceh, and out of a concern for one particular problem, addressing himself to the Muslim world as a whole. Another interesting fact is the example of a religious treatise (*at-Tuhfat al-Mursalah*) written in Arabic in India and sent to Aceh, becoming known in the Arabic centres of Islamic learning because of its popularity in Aceh and was used in the bitter quarrel between Nūr ad-Dīn ar-Rānīrī and the follower of Shams ad-Dīn as-Sumaṭrānī; the situation that prompted Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī to write his commentary on it.

Let it be stressed, as Johns correctly points out, that in Islamic learning the relation between teacher and student is crucial. This is evident in this study as the influence of both Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī and his *Jāwī* student, 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī can clearly be seen in the works of 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself.

In another article, "Islam in the Malay World: an exploratory survey with some reference to Quranic Exegesis," Johns mentioned another *Jāwī* pundit in the seventeenth century from Minangkabau who copied a commentary by Sa'īd b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Farghānī Sa'd ad-Dīn (d. 699/1299), entitled *Muntahā al-Madārik* on the Egyptian mystic 'Umar b. 'Alī Ibn al-Fārid's (576-632/1181-1235) celebrated poem *at-Ta'īyyat al-Kubrā*.⁴⁶ This commentary was copied at Medina on 6 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1096/10 April 1685 by Muḥammad Jamāl ad-Dīn b. Shihāb ad-Dīn al-Jāwī as-Sumpudānawī ash-Shaṭṭarī. 'As-Sumpudānawī'

probably come from the place name Sumpu(r)danau, an inland staging post on the main trading route from the West coast of Sumatra to the high plateau. Johns suggests that the Minangkabau Jamāl ad-Dīn might have been one of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī's *Jāwī* students, as Muṣṭafā b. Faṭḥ Allāh al-Ḥamawī (d. 1124/11712) relates in his *Fawā'id al-Irtihāl* (Benefits of Travel) when he met Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī in 1085/1675 that *Jāwī* students attended classes given by his teacher. Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī on expounding one of his works, also quotes from *at-Tā'iyyat al-Kubrā*.⁴⁷

This suggestion becomes more probable if we take into account the fact that Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī had numerous students including those from the Archipelago (*Aṣḥāb al-Jāwīyyīn*), as al-Kattānī points out that practically all seekers after 'ilm during his time in *al-Ḥaramayn* were his students, and al-Murādī eulogised him by saying that he was "a mountain among the mountains of 'ilm (knowledge), a sea among the seas of 'irfān (gnosticism)."⁴⁸ Therefore, it is more than likely that Jamāl ad-Dīn was in fact one of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī's numerous students as both teacher and student would have met in Medina where he resided until his death in 1101/1690.

John's article does not only show this connection between the 'ulamā' of the Archipelago and those of Arabia, but also explicitly demonstrates the impact of Indian politics and the influence of Indian scholars on the Archipelago. This is best observed in the seventeenth century in the relation of 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkilī who lived in Mecca and studied successively under the *khalīfah* of the Shaṭṭāriyyah *Ṣūfī* Order, Aḥmad al-Qushāshī, and later under his successor, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī. Both belonged to a body of mystics which was strongly subject to Indian influence, as Aḥmad al-Qushāshī and his teacher, Aḥmad b. 'Alī ash-Shinnāwī (d. 1028/1619) of Egypt were both students of an Indian *Ṣūfī* teacher, Ṣibghat Allāh b. Rūḥ Allāh b. Jamāl Allāh al-Barwajī (d. 1015/1606), who initiated the latter into the Shaṭṭāriyyah order. Ṣibghat Allāh himself was a student of the leading Indian Shaṭṭāriyyah master, Wajīh ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. Naṣr Allāh al-'Alawī al-Gujarātī (902-997/1496-1589), who in turn was the student of the famous Indian Shaṭṭāriyyah shaykh, Abū al-Mu'ayyad Muḥammad Ghawth al-Hindī (d. 970/1563).⁴⁹ It is worth mentioning that by the end of the sixteenth century, the Shaṭṭāriyyah order was firmly established in India, namely in Burhanpur,

Bengal and Gujarat. From the latter, it spread into Mecca and Medina, and later to the Malay Archipelago.⁵⁰

Johns asserts that it was from Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī that ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf as-Sinkīlī later received a permit (*ijāzah*) to found a branch of the order in Aceh. However, from his *isnād* on the *silsilat aṭ-ṭarīqah ash-Shaṭṭāriyyah* and *al-Qādiriyyah*, it is clear that he took both the Shaṭṭāriyyah and Qādiriyyah orders directly from Aḥmad al-Qushāshī and not from Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī.⁵¹ Though the latter was a teacher of ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf as-Sinkīlī, Azra points out that he was more likely to be his intellectual teacher, while Aḥmad al-Qushāshī was his spiritual and mystical master, and as a sign of his completion of studying the mystical way with his teacher, he appointed him as his *khalīfah*.⁵²

The influence of Indian scholars on the Malay Archipelago is also evident through the earlier mentioned Indian Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allāh al-Burhānpūrī, author of *at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalah*, indicating the formal pattern of mystical teaching spread through the Malay Archipelago. Muḥammad al-Burhānpūrī himself had strong connections with the ‘*ulamā*’ of *al-Ḥaramayn* where he is reported to have sojourned and studied for twelve years, especially with the *ḥadīth* scholar, Shaykh ‘Alī b. Ḥusām ad-Dīn al-Hindī al-Makkī (d. after 952/1545). He later returned to Ahmadabad, India, where he got married and studied with the leading Indian Shaṭṭāriyyah master, Wajīh ad-Dīn al-Gujarātī for another twelve years. He then took up residence in Burhanpur, central India, where he taught and later died in 1029/1620. Without doubt, Muḥammad al-Burhānpūrī was one of the eminent Indian scholars who professed and propagated the *Ṣūfī* doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. In Burhanpur, he wrote one of his most important single works, *at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalah ilā ‘n-Nabī*, completed in 999/1590, which later found its way to the Malay Archipelago.⁵³

It was also during the seventeenth century that the strains and stresses between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the Mughal Empire found an echo in Aceh. The Mughal emperor Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar (1556-1605) was not an orthodox Muslim. Not only did he tolerate religions other than Islam, but he also encouraged debate on philosophical and religious issues which led him to conclude that no single religion could claim the monopoly of truth; this inspired him to create his own

religious cult, *ad-Dīn al-Ilāhī* or the ‘Divine Faith.’ This *ad-Dīn al-Ilāhī* syncretised the best elements of the religions of his empire, primarily Hinduism and Islam; elements were also taken from Christianity, Jainism and Zoroastrianism, whereby he attempted to reconcile the differences that divided his subjects. Various Muslim scholars responded by declaring this to be blasphemy which led to a certain tension between orthodox circles and the court. Under Akbar’s rule, the court abolished the *jizyah* (tax on non-Muslims partly comparable with *zakāh* for Muslims) and abandoned use of the Muslim lunar calendar in favor of a solar calendar. His son, Nūr ad-Dīn Sālim Jahangir, who succeeded him and ruled the empire from 1605 to 1627, was a religious moderate. His mother being Hindu and his father setting up an independent faith-of-the-court (*ad-Dīn al-Ilāhī*), he kept religious moderation as a center piece of state policy. It was these years that saw the fullest development of heterodox mysticism in Aceh.⁵⁴

The close contact with Indian scholars and the influence of al-Burhānpūrī’s *at-Tuhfat* clearly indicate the dependence of *Jāwī Ṣūfīs* in their speculation on Indian Muslim *Ṣūfīs*, hence making it probable, as Johns suggests, that scholars from the Malay Archipelago travelled not only to centres of Islamic learning in the Arab world, but also to India in their search for religious knowledge.⁵⁵ In fact, I have found evidence in a manuscript of one of ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf as-Sinkīlī’s works where he clearly states that he studied in India with its scholars. Among them he mentions Shaykh Badr ad-Dīn al-Lāhūrī and Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh [b. Sa’d Allāh al-Ḥanafī] al-Lāhūrī (985-1083/1577-1672).⁵⁶ He says: “... *ini jumlah segala mashayikh yang telah mengambil faedah fakir ini daripada mereka itu dalam negeri Arab ... maka beroleh pula fakir ini mengambil faedah dalam antara segala manusia itu daripada dua orang ‘ulamā’, dalam negeri Hindi, yang bernama Shaykh Badr ad-Dīn [al-] Lāhūrī dan Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh [al-] Lāhūrī.*”⁵⁷

The strong scholarly connections between the ‘ulamā’ of Arabia and the *Jāwī* community in the seventeenth century, as mentioned earlier, is not only obvious from the attention they received during their sojourn in *al-Ḥaramayn*, particularly from Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, but this also continues when these students eventually completed their studies and travelled back to their homeland. The continued attention, especially to religious

issues arising back in the Archipelago, can be seen clearly reflected in an untitled treatise by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī which begins: “*faqad warada su’āl min ba’d Jazā’ir Jāwah Sanat 1089 Hijriyah*,” written in response to questions posed and sent to him from the Archipelago in 1089/1678.⁵⁸ I am able to confirm that this treatise is entitled *al-Maslak al-Jalī fī Ḥukm Shaṭḥ al-Walī* from a preface by ‘Abd al-Ghanī an-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731) to a manuscript copy of this work. He states that *al-Maslak al-Jalī* was written by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī in response to a question posed to him from *Jāwah* and that an-Nābulusī himself later wrote an exposition to address the same issue entitled *Sharḥ Risālat al-Maslak al-Jalī fī Ḥukm Shaṭḥ al-Walī* which an-Nābulusī completed on Friday, 13 Sha‘bān 1139/5 April 1727.⁵⁹ In this regard he says “... wajadtu risālah ismuhā *al-Maslak al-Jalī fī Ḥukm Shaṭḥ al-Walī li ‘sh-Shaykh al-Imām al-‘Allāmah al-‘Umdah al-Muḥaqqiq al-Mudaqqiq al-Fahhāmah al-Munlā Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī al-Madanī ... ajāba bi-hā ‘an su’āl warada ‘alayhi min ba’d Jazā’ir Jāwah min aqsā Bilād al-Hind fī sanat sitt wa-thamānīn wa-alḥ ḥāshiluhu ayyad Allāh Ta‘āla al-‘ulamā’ ahl al-taḥqīq wa-hadā bi-him aṭ-ṭālibīn sawā’ aṭ-ṭarīq ...*”⁶⁰

In addition, it is now possible to argue on the basis of fresh evidence that the anonymous scholar described as ‘some visiting scholars to *Jāwah* who were highly praised for their knowledge of exoteric and esoteric sciences’ (*ba’d al-‘ulamā’ al-wāridīn ilaiḥā min-man yuthnā ‘alaihi biannahu ‘ālim bi ‘l-‘ilm az-ẓāhir wa ‘l-bāṭin*), to be none other than Nūr ad-Dīn ar-Rānirī. It is evident from several of his works that he mentioned the exact issue pertaining to the notorious ecstatic utterances or the sweeping statements (*shaṭaḥāt*) of *Ṣūfīs* which were later answered by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī.⁶¹ It is worthwhile mentioning that the questions about the *shaṭaḥāt* posted from the Archipelago were perhaps sent by ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf as-Sinkīlī himself. As already demonstrated earlier, he enjoyed a special teacher-student relation with Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī and was probably his closest *Jāwī* disciple. Furthermore, as-Sinkīlī’s travels to the Arab world were between 1052/1642 and 1072/1661, hence, he was back in the Archipelago by the time the question was posed and sent in 1089/1678.

A systematic and comprehensive analysis of the network connecting the *Jāwī ‘ulamā’* and the centres of Islamic learning in Arabia in the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was recently undertaken by Azyumardi Azra. In his book *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'Ulamā' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, based mostly on his PhD dissertation, he successfully sketches and demonstrates the intensive scholarly connections and hence proves that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries constituted one of the most dynamic periods in the socio-intellectual history of Islam, particularly pertaining to the Islamic history of Southeast Asia.

For the seventeenth century, Azra lists three major *Jāwī* scholars in historical sequence, Nūr ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥasanjī al-Ḥumayd ash-Shāfi'ī al-Ash'arī al-'Aydārūs ar-Rānīrī (d. 1068/1658), though born in Rānīr (modern Randir) India, he is generally regarded as a *Jāwī 'ālim*, probably of Arab origin rather than Indian or Arab, as he wrote eloquently both in Malay and Arabic. The second scholar in the seventeenth century whom Azra studied was 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf b. 'Alī al-Jāwī al-Fanṣūrī as-Sinkīlī, a Malay of Fanṣūr, Sinkil (modern Singkel) on the south-western coastal region of Aceh. 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf as-Sinkīlī, as indicated previously, has been studied by Johns who managed to trace his connections with the Arab scholars of his period. Finally the third *Jāwī* scholar in the seventeenth century is Muḥammad Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh Abū al-Maḥāsīn at-Tāj al-Khalwātī al-Maqassārī (1037-1111/1627-99). Al-Maqassārī, as he tells us himself, was a student of al-Rānīrī but probably studied with him in India as the latter had left for Rānīr when the former departed from Makassar, hence, it is unlikely that they met in Aceh. As al-Maqassārī's period of study in Mecca and Medina coincided with that of as-Sinkīlī, therefore it can be expected that he must have studied with the same teachers as the latter.

While these three key figures are given particular attention by Azra as each was studied individually in a separate chapter to demonstrate their links with the '*ulamā'*' of the Arab world in the seventeenth century,⁶² by contrast, the scholars of the eighteenth century only receive partial attention as all of them were grouped and studied only in one chapter.⁶³ These include scholars such as Muḥammad Arshad al-Banjārī, Muḥammad Nafīs al-Banjārī, 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī and Dāwūd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Faṭānī. Though all of them do not have direct teacher-

student connections with al-Rānīrī, as-Sinkīlī or al-Maqassārī, their teachers from the Arab centres of Islamic learning, especially in Mecca, Medina, Egypt, Yemen, Damascus, etc., were prominent scholars in the eighteenth century who had direct connections with earlier scholars of these centres.

It is important to comprehend that the links between the Malay Archipelago and the Arab world, especially Mecca as a centre for Islamic learning for centuries, was an ongoing and continuous tradition that developed further in the nineteenth century. This is evident from the numerous *Jāwī* ‘*ulamā*’ who became prominent teachers and formed an integral part of the scholarly network especially in Mecca in this period. The close teacher-student bonds of the *Jāwī* community who studied with numerous Arab scholars of Mecca, even apart from studying with their compatriots, were evident as they were asking for *fatwās* (Islamic legal opinions) on religious issues arising back in their homeland. For instance, even in the nineteenth century, ‘Abd as-Salām b. Idrīs al-Jāwī al-Ashī, in 1305/1887, translated into Malay a collection of *fatwās* pertaining to religious issues back in the Malay Archipelago originally issued by three renowned scholars of Mecca, Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān (d. 1304/1886), the Meccan Yemeni Muḥammad Sa‘īd Bā-Buṣayl (1249-1330/1833-1912), both Shāfi‘ī *mufīīs* in Mecca successively, and Muḥammad b. Sulaymān Ḥasab Allāh (d. 1335/1916).⁶⁴

Therefore, studying these *Jāwī* scholars individually along with their works, which up to the present day have not been sufficiently studied, will definitely give us a better and clearer picture of their contributions to the development of Islam in the Archipelago and hence, a better understanding of the religious and cultural history of Southeast Asia.

The ‘*Ulamā*’ of Palembang Origin

The ‘*ulamā*’ from the Archipelago have attracted the interest of modern scholars as a subject of study because it provides a better understanding of the process of Islamization and the intellectual history of Southeast Asia in a wider context. In this sense, Palembang was no exception. However, unlike the case of its predecessor in Aceh, North Sumatra, it was not until the eighteenth century that ‘*ulamā*’ from South Sumatra began to make

their appearance. This undoubtedly indicates that it was only from the eighteenth century onwards that Palembang began to play an important role in the Islamization process in the Archipelago and was eventually to supersede Aceh as the new centre for Islamic learning.

This needs to be seen against the historical background. Namely the fact that from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries A.D., Sri Vijaya, a Mahayana Buddhist kingdom, having the port of Palembang united with its neighbouring Melayu (Jambi) as its centre, flourished during this period in South East Sumatra and that Islam had only penetrated later. Sri Vijaya was renowned especially during the eighth – tenth centuries for its famous study centres for Buddhism and Sanskrit. The famous Chinese Buddhist pilgrim I-tsing, who visited this kingdom on his way to India in 671 A.D., observed the presence of over a thousand Buddhist monks, and thus he stayed there for six months studying Sanskrit grammar before embarking to India and four more years on his return.⁶⁵ This without doubt indicates the importance of Sri Vijaya as a Mahayana Buddhist centre of learning before its decline and the arrival of Islam later on.

Traditional accounts indicate that Islam was said to have been introduced into Palembang only in the fifteenth century, about 1440 by Raden Raḥmat.⁶⁶ It was only later, from the seventeenth century onwards, after the Sultanate of Palembang officially adopted Islam as its religion, that the course of Islam developed rapidly.⁶⁷

However, similar to the case of Aceh in the seventeenth century, it was largely due to the patronage of the Sulṭān of Palembang in the eighteenth century that most of its '*ulamā*' began to flourish during this period and numerous students of Palembang origin were able to make their appearance in centres of Islamic learning, especially in *al-Ḥaramayn*, including 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself.

Gerardus Willebrordus Joannes Drewes (d. 1992), in his work on Palembang manuscripts and authors of the eighteenth century, provides a list of '*ulamā*' and authors of Palembang origin, eleven of them to be exact, together with their known works. This include Shihāb ad-Dīn b. 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad who authored *Kitāb 'Aqīdat al-Bayān*, a short and simple survey of the twenty attributes of God (*ṣifāt dua puluh*) and an exposition of the meaning of the short creed '*naḥī ithbāt*' or the Negation and the Affirmation; a *Risālah* dealing with the *kalimat ash-shahādah*

(statement of testimony) in a mystical sense, intended to shield people from both manifest and hidden polytheism (*shirk jalī* and *shirk khafī*); and a Malay translation of an Arabic commentary on the well-known *Jawharat at-Tawḥīd* by Ibrāhīm al-Laḳānī (d. 1041/1631), which he completed in 1163/1750. Shihāb ad-Dīn's son, Muḥammad Muḥyī ad-Dīn who translated into Malay an Arabic 'Life of Muḥammad as-Sammān' entitled *Hikayat Shaikh Muhammad Samman*, completed in 1196/1781. Kemas Fakhr ad-Dīn who has four works attributed to him, among them *Kitāb Mukhtaṣar*, a Malay translation of the revered Damascene saint, Walī Raslān ad-Dimashqī's (d. 541/1146) *Risālah fī 't-Tawḥīd*, with additions borrowed from the commentaries by the prolific Egyptian *Qāḍī*, Shaykh al-Islām Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī (d. 926/1520) and the eighteenth century Damascene *Ṣūfī* and 'ālim, 'Abd al-Ghanī an-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731); and *Khawāṣṣ al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, dealing with the eminent qualities of the chapters and verses of the Qur'ān, began in 1183/1769 and completed in 1184/1770. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Kemas Badr ad-Dīn (1132-77/1719-63) who under the patronage of Sulṭān Maḥmūd Badr ad-Dīn (r. 1724-57) of Palembang wrote his *Nafaḥāt ar-Raḥmān fī Manāqib Ustādhinā al-A'ẓam as-Sammān*, on virtues (*manāqib*) and miracles (*karāmat*) of the renowned eighteenth century *Ṣūfī* saint (*walī*) in Medina, Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm as-Sammān (d. 1189/1775); and *Baḥr al-'Ajā'ib*, which deals with calculations for the prediction of future events, translated from the Arabic *Baḥr al-Wuqūf fī 'Ilm at-Tawfīq wa 'l-Hurūf* of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Bisṭāmī (d. 858/1454). Probably the most prominent among those included in this list was 'Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself, with seven works credited to him (including *Tuḥfat ar-Rāghibīn*, which I will prove later is wrongly attributed to him).⁶⁸

It is worth mentioning that based on my investigation of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Kemas's *Nafaḥāt ar-Raḥmān*, the account of 'his year of birth' 1132/1719 and 'his year of death' 1177/1763 given by van Ronkel and Winstedt cannot possibly be accepted.⁶⁹ What can be deduced from this work is that he himself was not a direct student of as-Sammān as he addressed him as '*shaykh mashyāyikhinā*' (teacher of our teachers); rather he was a student of as-Sammān's students such as his own father, Aḥmad Kemas al-Falimbānī, Ṣiddīq b. 'Umar Khān al-Madanī, 'Abd ar-

Raḥmān b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Maghribī, and as-Sammān’s own son, ‘Abd al-Karīm.⁷⁰ If Muḥammad Kemas was born in 1132/1719, it seems strange that he did not accompany his father to study directly with as-Sammān, who himself was born in 1130/1717, especially knowing that his father, Aḥmad Kemas, was a devoted disciple of as-Sammān who venerated his teacher highly. Furthermore, in his *Nafaḥāt ar-Raḥmān*, the author devoted a chapter to numerous *karāmats* of as-Sammān reported by his students after his death (1189/1775).⁷¹ It should be understood that in the *Ṣūfī*’s tradition, the *karāmat* of a *walī* does not only occur during his life but continues even after his death. Therefore, if Muḥammad Kemas died in 1177/1763, it is impossible for him to write this chapter as as-Sammān was still alive at that time. It is also unlikely that as-Sammān’s *manāqib* could have been written in Palembang before 1763 as he was still alive and as a rule, such works are not compiled until the venerated *Ṣūfī* scholar had passed away.

Johns, in his studies on Islam in the Malay Archipelago, mentioned three ‘*ulamā*’ of Palembang in the eighteenth century including ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī himself. All of them were already mentioned by Drewes in his work. Nevertheless, Johns points out that out of the three ‘*ulamā*’, it was ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī who gained much more than just local importance as he spent most of his intellectual life and writing career in Mecca.⁷²

Apart from the known ‘*ulamā*’ of Palembang and their works whom Drewes and Johns have listed, there are further ‘*ulamā*’ that are not known to modern studies as their names have never appeared in these works. This can be seen, for instance, in names such as ‘Āqib b. Ḥasan ad-Dīn b. Ja‘far al-Falimbānī al-Madanī, his brother, Ṣāliḥ al-Falimbānī, their grandfather, Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-Falimbānī (d. 1128/1715 in Mecca), Maḥmūd b. Kinān al-Falimbānī and others.⁷³ It is from their teacher-student links with ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī that we can more precisely conclude that most of them lived or at least were alive in the eighteenth century. Despite the large number of Palembang ‘*ulamā*’ that were contemporaneous to ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Falimbānī, without doubt, he transcended them in fame as we will see in the following chapters.

Endnotes

- ¹ These include al-Qannūjī's (d. 1307/1889) *at-Tāj al-Mukallal min Jawāhir Maāthir at-Ṭirāz 'l-Akhir wa 'l-Awwal* (The Garlanded Crown with Jewels of Achievements of the Latter and the Earlier); *Tarājim A'yān al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah fī 'l-Qarn 12 Hijrī* (Biographical Notices of Notables of Medina in the Twelfth Century A.H.) by an anonymous author and edited by Muḥammad at-Tunjī; al-Ahdalī's (d. 1972) *al-Qawl al-A'dal fī Tarājim Banī al-Ahdal* (The Veritable Statement on the Biographical Notices of the al-Ahdal Family); Muḥammad Muṭī' al-Ḥāfiẓ and Nizār Abāzah's compilations of *'Ulamā' Dimashq wa-A'yānuhā fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Ashar al-Hijrī* (Damascene Scholars and Notables in the Twelfth Century A.H.) and *'Ulamā' Dimashq wa-A'yānuhā fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Ashar al-Hijrī* (Damascene Scholars and Notables in the Thirteenth Century A.H.); al-Ḥusaynī's (d. 1226/1811) *Tarājim Ahl 'l-Quds fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Ashar al-Hijrī* (Biographical Notices on the People of Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century A.H.); al-Mu'allimī's *A'lām al-Makkiyyīn min 'l-Qarn at-Tāsi' ilā 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi' 'Ashar al-Hijrī* (Prominent Scholars of Mecca from the Ninth till the Fourteenth Century A.H.); al-Ālūsī's (d. 1340/1922) *ad-Durr al-Muntathar fī Rijāl al-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Ashar wa 'th-Thālith 'Ashar* (The Dispersed Pearls on the Men of the Twelfth and the Thirteenth Centuries); Aḥmad Taymūr Bāshā's (d. 1348/1930) *Tarājim A'yān al-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Ashar wa-Awā'il ar-Rābi' 'Ashar* (Biographical Notices of Notables of the Thirteenth and the Early Fourteenth Century); al-Ḥaḍrāwī's (d. 1327/1909) *Nuzhat al-Fikar fī-mā Maḍā min 'l-Ḥawādith wa 'l-'Ibar fī Tarājim Rijāl al-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Ashar wa 'th-Thālith 'Ashar* (Promenade of the Intellect on the Past Events and Lessons from the Biographical Notices of Men of the Twelfth and the Thirteenth Centuries); ash-Shaṭṭī's *Rawḍ al-Bashar fī A'yān Dimashq fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Ashar 1200 – 1300* (Gardens of Humankind on the Damascene Notables in the Thirteenth Century 1200-1300) and *A'yān Dimashq fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Ashar wa-Niṣf 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi' 'Ashar 1201-1350* (Damascene Notables in the Thirteenth and the first half of the Fourteenth Centuries 1201-1350); al-Qādirī's (d. 1187/1773) *Ilṭiqāt ad-Durar wa-Mustafād al-Mawā'iz wa 'l-'Ibar min Akhbār wa-A'yān al-Mi'ah al-Ḥādiyah wa 'th-Thāniah 'Ashar* (Gleans of Pearls and Beneficial Lessons from the Accounts and Notables of the Eleventh and the Twelfth Centuries) and *Nashr al-Mathānī li-Ahl 'l-Qarn al-Ḥādī 'Ashar wa 't-Thānī* (The Dual Diffusions on the People

of the Eleventh and the Twelfth Centuries); Mirdād's (d. 1343/1924) *al-Mukhtaṣar min Kitāb Nashr an-Nawr wa 'z-Zahr fī Tarājīm Afādīl Makkah min 'l-Qarn al-'Āshir ilā 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi'* 'Aṣhar (Abstract from the Book of Blossoms and Flowers Diffusion on the Biographical Notices of the Elite of Mecca from the Tenth till the Fourteenth century); Mardām Beyk's (d. 1378/1959) *A'yān al-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Aṣhar fī 'l-Fikr wa 's-Siāsah wa 'l-Ijtimā'* (Notables of the Thirteenth Century in Thought, Politics and Society).

- ² Al-Muḥibbī's *Khulāṣat al-Athar fī A'yān al-Qarn al-Ḥādī 'Aṣhar* (The Epitome of Traditions on Notable persons of the Eleventh Century); al-Murādī's *Salk ad-Durar fī A'yān al-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Aṣhar* (The Stringing of Pearls on Notable Persons of the Twelfth Century); al-Bayṭār's *Ḥilyat al-Bashar fī Tārīkh al-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Aṣhar* (The Ornamentation of Humankind on the History of the Thirteenth Century); 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Siyar wa-Tarājīm Ba'd 'l-'Ulamā' inā fī 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi'* 'Aṣhar li 'l-Hijrah (Biographical Notices of Some of our Scholars in the Fourteenth Century).
- ³ Al-Ghazzī's *al-Kawākib as-Sā'irah bi-A'yān al-Mi'ah al-'Āshirah* (The Orbiting Planets on the Notables of the Tenth Century).
- ⁴ Al-Aḥdal's *an-Nafas al-Yamānī wa 'r-Rawḥ ar-Rayḥānī fī Ijāzat al-Quḍāt Banī ash-Shawkānī* (The Yemeni Breath and the Delightful repose on the Authorisations of ash-Shawkānī's sons).
- ⁵ Zabārah's *Nayl al-Waṭar min Tarājīm Rijāl al-Yaman fī 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Aṣhar min Hijrat Sayyid al-Bashar SAW* (Attainment of Purpose from Biographical Notices of the Yemeni Scholars in the Thirteenth Century); al-Ḥāfiẓ's *Tārīkh 'Ulamā' Dimashq fī 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi'* 'Aṣhar al-Hijrī (History of Damascene Scholars in the Fourteenth Century A.H.); at-Tunjī's (ed.) *Tarājīm A'yān al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah fī 'l-Qarn 12 Hijrī* (Biographical Notices of Notables of Medina in the Twelfth Century A.H.).
- ⁶ Al-Ālūsī's *al-Misk al-Adhfar fī Nashr Mazāyā al-Qarn ath-Thānī 'Aṣhar wa 'th-Thālith 'Aṣhar* (The Pungent Musk in the Diffusion of Traits of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries); ash-Shawkānī's *al-Badr at-Tālī' bi-Maḥāsin Man Ba'da 'l-Qarn as-Sābi'* (The Rising Full Moon on the Good Qualities of those after the Seventh Century); al-Mu'allimī's *A'lām al-Makkiyyīn min 'l-Qarn at-Tāsi' ilā 'l-Qarn ar-Rābi'* 'Aṣhar al-Hijrī (The Learned Scholars of Mecca from the Ninth till the Fourteenth Century A.H.); al-Hīlah's *at-Tārīkh wa 'l-Mu'arrikhūn bi-Makkah min 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith al-Hijrī ilā 'l-Qarn ath-Thālith 'Aṣhar: Jama' wa-'Arḍ wa-Ta'rīf*

(The History and Historians of Mecca from the Third till the Thirteenth Century A.H.: compilation, presentation and definition).

7 See van Bruinessen, Martin, "A Note on Source Materials for the Biographies of Southeast Asian 'Ulama," in *La Transmission Du Savoir Dans Le Monde Musulman Peripherique, Lettre d'information*, (17, 1997) p. 59.

8 According to as-Sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad ash-Shāṭirī in his *al-Mu'jam al-Laṭīf*, p. 81, "al-Ḥabashī with *fatḥ al-ḥā'* and *al-bā'* as it is commonly known, but some pronounce it al-Ḥabshī with *sukūn al-bā'* in attenuation, while the people of Ḥijāz pronounce it al-Ḥibshī with *kasr al-ḥā'* and *sukūn al-bā'*. The house of al-Ḥabshī trace back their attribution to Abū Bakr al-Ḥabshī, nicknamed with al-Ḥabshī for his travels and sojourn in al-Ḥabashah (Abyssinia) propagating Islamic teachings for nearly twenty years. What al-Kattānī claims in his *Fahras* to be al-Ḥibshī is merely following the pronunciation that he heard from the people of Ḥijāz." See Abū Ghuddah (d. 1417/1996), 'Abd al-Fattāḥ, *Imdād al-Fattāḥ bi-Asānīd wa-Marwiyyāt ash-Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāḥ*, edited by Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh Āli Rashīd (1st edition, Riyadh, Maktabat al-Imām ash-Shāfi'ī, 1419/1999), p. 254.

9 For al-Fādānī's works on *isnād* alone al-Mar'ashlī listed about sixty five of them. See al-Fādānī, *ar-Rawḍ al-Fā'ih wa-Bughyat al-Ghādī wa'r-Rā'ih bi-Ijāzah Faḍīlat al-Ustādh Muḥammad Riyāḍ al-Māliḥ (1358-1419/1939-1998)*, edited by Yūsuf al-Mar'ashlī (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1426/2005), pp. 102-9.

10 See Mamdūḥ, Abū Sulaymān Maḥmūd Sa'īd b. Muḥammad Mamdūḥ al-Qāhirī al-Miṣrī ash-Shāfi'ī, *Tashnīf al-Asmā' bi-Shuyūkh al-Ijāzah wa's-Samā', aw, Imtā' Ūlī 'n-Nazar bi-Ba'd A'yān al-Qarn ar-Rābi' 'Ashar* (al-Iskandariyyah, Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1984), p. 11; al-Fādānī, *ar-Rawḍ al-Fā'ih*, pp. 104, 106; idem, *al-'Iqd al-Farīd min Jawāhir al-Asānīd* (2nd edition, Surabaya, Dār as-Saqāf, 1401/1980), p. 1. I understand that at least one copy of this work exist in a private library in Mecca but I was not able to consult it.

11 See al-Falimbānī (d. 1411/1991), Muḥammad Mukhtār ad-Dīn b. Zayn al-'Ābidīn, *Bulūgh al-Amānī fī 't-Ta'rīf bi-Shuyūkh wa-Asānīd Musnīd al-'Aṣr ash-Shaykh Muḥammad Yāsīn b. Muḥammad 'Īsā al-Fādānī al-Makkī; Silsilat at-Ta'rīf bi-Shuyūkh wa-Asānīd Musnīd al-'Aṣr 'I'* (1st edition, Damascus, Dār Qutaybah; Jeddah, Dār 'Izzī, 1408/1988), vol. 1, p.7.

- ¹² See al-Fādānī, *ar-Rawḍ al-Fā'ih*, edited by al-Mar'ashlī, p. 109; Yūsuf, Muḥammad Khayr Ramaḍān, *Tatimmat al-A'lām li 'z-Ziriklī* (2 vols., 1st edition, Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1418/1998), vol. 2, p. 143.
- ¹³ See Bruinessen, "A Note on Source Materials," p. 59. Cf. al-Fādānī, *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*, pp. 20, 34, 63, 68; idem, *Asānīd al-Faqīh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī* (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1409/1988), p. 36; idem, *al-Arba'ūn al-Buldāniyyah: Arba'ūn Ḥadīthan 'an Arba'īn Shaykhan min Arba'īn Baladan* (2nd edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1407/1987), p. 66; idem, *an-Nafḥat al-Miskiyyah fī 'l-Asānīd al-Makkiyyah* (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1410/1990), pp. 64, 114.
- ¹⁴ According to Yūsuf, even the works of Muḥammad Mukhtār al-Falimbānī himself are not free from such mistakes, see Yūsuf, *Tatimmat al-A'lām*, vol. 2, p. 143.
- ¹⁵ *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah aṣ-Ṣughrā* (The Small Biographical Compendiums on the Generations of Shāfi'ī Scholars) and *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā* (The Large Biographical Compendiums on the Generations of Shāfi'ī Scholars). See al-Fādānī, *ar-Rawḍ al-Fā'ih*, p. 53; al-Kuzbarī (d. 1262/1846), 'Abd ar-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, *Thabat al-Kuzbarī* (1st edition, Damascus, Dār al-Baṣā'ir, 1403/1983), p. 15; Bruinessen, *op. cit.*, p. 58. Perhaps these works are still in manuscript form, as al-Mar'ashlī points out that most of al-Fādānī's unpublished works are still kept in his personal library in Mecca.
- ¹⁶ See Abū Ghuddah, *Imdād al-Fattāḥ*, pp. 500-2.
- ¹⁷ See Khawqīr (d. 1349/1930), Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad 'Arīf b. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Makkī al-Kutbī al-Ḥanbalī, *Thabat al-Athbāt ash-Shahīrah*, edited by Rāshid b. 'Āmir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ghufaylī (1st edition, Riyadh, s.n., 1425/2004), pp. 11-2; Ghāzī (d. 1365/1945), 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Hindī al-Makkī, *Fath al-Qawī fī Dhikri Asānīd as-Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī al-'Alawī* (1st edition, Published by his grandson Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī, 1418/1997), p. 242.
- ¹⁸ See Sunbul (d. 1175/1761), Muḥammad Sa'īd b. Muḥammad Sunbul al-Majlā'ī ash-Shāfi'ī al-Makkī, *al-Awā'il as-Sunbuliyyah wa-Dhayluhā*, edited by 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (Beirut, Maktabat al-Maṭbū'āt al-Islāmiyyah, 1427/2006), pp. 13-4.
- ¹⁹ For further discussion on the range of terminology used for *isnād* works, see al-Kattānī, *Fahras al-Fahāris*, vol. 1, pp. 67-71; vol. 2, pp. 609-10, 624.

- ²⁰ See al-Ḥabshī (d. 1314/1896), ‘Aydārūs b. ‘Umar b. ‘Aydārūs al-‘Alawī, *‘Uqūd al-La’āl fī Asānīd ar-Rijāl* (1st edition, Cairo, Maṭba‘at Lajnat al-Bayān al-‘Arabī, 1970), pp. 27-8.
- ²¹ See Khawqīr, *Thabat al-Athbāt ash-Shahīrah*, pp. 12-3.
- ²² See as-Sindī (d. 1257/1841), Muḥammad ‘Ābid b. Aḥmad ‘Alī al-Ayyūbī an-Naqshabandī, *Ḥaṣr ash-Shārid min Asānīd Muḥammad ‘Ābid*, edited by Khalīl b. ‘Uthmān al-Jabūr as-Sabī‘ī (2 vols., 1st edition, Riyadh, Maktabat ar-Rushd Nāshirūn, 1424/2003), vol. 1, pp. 21-2; Khawqīr, *Thabat al-Athbāt ash-Shahīrah*, p. 12.
- ²³ See Ibn ‘Ābidīn (d. 1252/1836), Muḥammad Amīn b. ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ḥusaynī, *‘Uqūd al-La’āl fī ‘l-Asānīd al-‘Awālī*, edited by Muḥammad Abū al-Khayr ‘Ābidīn (Damascus, Maṭba‘at al-Ma‘ārif, 1302/1884), p. 231; aḏ-Ḍāhirī (d. 1328/1910), Fāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Muhannawī al-Madanī, *Ḥusnu ‘l-Wafā li-lkhwān aṣ-Ṣafā*, edited by Muḥammad Yāsīn b. ‘Īsā al-Fādānī (2nd edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā‘ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1409/1988), p. 5.
- ²⁴ See Murtaḏā az-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1790), Muḥammad Murtaḏā b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd ar-Razzāq al-Ḥusaynī al-‘Alawī, *al-Murabbī al-Kābulī fī man Rawā ‘an ash-Shams al-Bābilī*, edited by Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-‘Ajmī (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā‘ir al-Islāmiyyah; Damascus, Dār aṣ-Ṣiddīq, 1425/2004), p. 177; as-Saffārīnī (d. 1188/1774), Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Sālim al-Ḥanbalī al-Atharī, *Thabat al-Imām as-Saffārīnī al-Ḥanbalī wa-l-Jāzātuhu li-Ṭā’ifah min A’yān ‘Ulamā’ ‘Aṣrihi*, edited by Muḥammad b. Nāṣir al-‘Ajmī (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā‘ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1425/2004), pp. 32-3, 97, 212.
- ²⁵ ‘Aydārūs al-Ḥabshī relates that all his narrations from ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Ahdal is by way of general *ijāzah* (*al-ijāzah al-‘āmmah*), see his *‘Uqūd al-La’āl*, pp. 7, 27, 257.
- ²⁶ See al-Fādānī, *Ithāf al-Bararah bi-Asānīd al-Kutub al-Ḥadīthiyyah al-‘Asharah* (2nd edition, Damascus, Dār al-Baṣā‘ir, 1403/1983), pp. 10-12.
- ²⁷ Cf. al-Fādānī, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, pp. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 20, 29, *passim*.
- ²⁸ See Yule, Henry (ed. & trans.), *The Book Of Ser Marco Polo, The Venetian: Concerning The Kingdoms and Marvels of The East* (2 vols., 3rd edition, London, John Murray, 1903), vol. 2, p. 284; Ricklefs, M. C. *A History of Modern Indonesia Since C.1200* (3rd edition, California, Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 4; Gibb, H. A. R. (trans.) *Ibn Battuta Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power (eds.)

(London, George Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1929), pp. 273-6. For further discussions on the coming of Islam to the archipelago, see al-Attas, Syed Naguib, *Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of The Islamization of The Malay-Indonesian Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969), pp. 11-17; Drewes, G. W. J. "New Light on The Coming of Islam to Indonesia" in Ibrahim, Ahmad., Siddique, Sharon, & Hussain, Yasmin (eds.) *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), pp. 7-19; Fatimi, S. Q., *Islam Comes to Malaysia* (Singapore, Malaysian Sociological Institute, 1963), especially pp. 5-36.

²⁹ The Arabic epitaph reads: "*hādhā qabr al-marḥūm al-maghfūr at-taqī an-nāṣih al-ḥasīb an-nasīb al-karīm al-‘ābid al-fātiḥ al-mulaqqab bi-Sulṭān [al-Jmalik aṣ-ṣāliḥ].*" See Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, pp. 30-1; Baloch, N. A., *The Advent of Islam in Indonesia* (Islamabad, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1980), pp. 34-5.

³⁰ See al-Fādānī, *Ithāf al-Bararah*, p. 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² See az-Ziriklī (d. 1396/1976), Khayr ad-Dīn, *al-A'lām Qāmus Tarājīm li-Ashar ar-Rijāl wa 'n-Nisā' min 'l-'Arab wa 'l-Muta'rribīn wa 'l-Mustashriqīn* (8 vols., 13th edition, Beirut, Dār al-‘Ilm li ‘l-Malāyīn, 1998), vol. 1, p. 191; al-‘Aydarūs, Muḥammad Ḥasan, *Ashrāf Ḥaḍramawt wa-Dawruhum fī Nashr al-Islām bi-Janūb Sharq Āsiā* (1st edition, Abu Dhabi, Dār al-Mutanabbī li ‘ṭ-Ṭibā‘ah wa ‘n-Nashr, s.a.), pp. 14-22.

³³ See al-‘Aydarūs, *Ashrāf Ḥaḍramawt*, pp. 34, 37-44.

³⁴ Cf. al-Ḥasanī (d. 1341/1922), ‘Abd al-Ḥayy b. Fakhr ad-Dīn, *al-I‘lām bi-man fī Tārīkh al-Hind min 'l-A'lām al-Musammā bi-Nuzhat al-Khawātir wa-Bahjat al-Masāmi' wa 'n-Nawāzīr* (6 vols., 1st edition, Beirut, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1420/1999), vol. 5, pp. 465, 489, 511, passim.

³⁵ For further discussions on the *Ashrāf* of Hadramawt and their role in propagating Islam to Southeast Asia, see al-‘Aydarūs, *Ashrāf Ḥaḍramawt*, especially pp. 27-54.

³⁶ See as-Sinkilī (d. 1105/1693), ‘Abd ar-Ra‘ūf b. ‘Alī al-Jāwī, *Umdat al-Muhtājīn ilā Sulūk Maslak al-Mufradīn* (MS National Library of Malaysia), MSS 2466, fols. 59-60; Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature*, pp. 136-7, 148; al-Attas, *Some Aspects of Sufism*, p. 23; Ito, Takeshi, "Why did Nuruddin ar-Raniri leave Aceh in 1054 A.H.?" in *BKI* (134, 1978), p. 491; Johns, "Islam in the Malay World" pp. 121-3; idem, "Aspects of Sufī Thought in India and Indonesia in the first half of the 17th

- Century,” *JMBRAS*, 28 (1955), p. 72; idem, “From Coastal Settlement” pp. 11-2; Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism*, pp. 52, 71-7.
- 37 For further discussions on the history of the trade routes in the Indian Ocean, see Hourani, George Fadlo, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times* (Beirut, Khayats, 1963), especially pp. 61-79; Meilink-Roelofs, M. A. P., “Trade and Islam in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago prior to the arrival of the Europeans” in Richards, D. S. (ed.), *Islam and the Trade of Asia* (Oxford, Bruno Cassirer, 1970), pp. 137-155; Tibbetts, G. R., “Early Muslim Traders in South-East Asia,” *JMBRAS*, 30 (1957), pp. 1-45; Di Meglio, Rita Rose, “Arab Trade with Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula from the 8th to the 16th Century” in Richards, D. S. (ed.), *Islam and the Trade of Asia* (Oxford, Bruno Cassirer, 1970), pp. 105-26.
- 38 See Johns, “Aspects of Sufi Thought,” pp. 70-77; idem, “Friends in grace” pp. 469-485; idem, “From Coastal Settlement” pp. 3-28; idem, “The Role of Sufism in the Spread of Islam to Malaya and Indonesia,” *Journal of The Pakistan Historical Society*, 9 (1961), pp. 143-161; idem, “Islam in the Malay World” pp. 115-61; idem, “Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections and New Directions,” *Indonesia*, 19 (1975), pp. 33-55.
- 39 Cf. al-Kūrānī (d. 1101/1690), Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan ash-Shahrānī ash-Shahrazūrī, *Ithāf adh-Dhakī bi-Sharḥ at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalāh ilā Rūḥ an-Nabī* (MS National Library of Malaysia) MSFB (A) 978, p. 2.
- 40 *al-Jawābāt al-Gharāwīyyah ‘an ‘l-Masā’il al-Jāwīyyah al-Jahriyyah* (The Venerable Answers to the *Jāwī* Overtness Issues), see al-Baghdādī (d. 1339/1920), Ismā‘īl Bāshā b. Muḥammad Amīn, *Hadiyyat al-‘Arifīn Asmā’ al-Mu’allifīn wa-Athār al-Muṣannifīn* (2 vols., Istanbul, Wikālat al-Ma‘ārif al-Jalīlah, 1951), vol. 1, p. 35; idem, *Īdāḥ al-Maknūn fī ‘dh-Dhyāl ‘alā Kashfaḥ-Ḥunūn ‘an Asāmī al-Kutub wa ‘l-Funūn* (2 vols., Beirut, Dār Iḥyā’ at-Turāth al-‘Arabī, s.a.), vol. 1, p. 370; al-Murādī (d. 1206/1791), Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Khalīl b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī ad-Dimashqī, *Salk ad-Durar fī A’yān al-Qarn ath-Thānī ‘Ashar*, edited by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir Shāhīn (4 vols., 1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1418/1997), vol. 1, p. 10. On debating the permissibility of recitation of *dhikr* aloud (*jahr*), ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Ahdal supported his opinion by quoting his evidence from the *al-Jawābāt al-Gharāwīyyah*, see his *an-Nafas al-Yamānī*, pp. 141-2.
- 41 *al-Jāddat al-Qawīmah ilā Taḥqīq Mas’alat al-Wujūd wa-Ta’alluq al-Qudrat al-Qadīmah fī ‘l-Jawāb ‘an ‘l-As’ilat al-Wāridah min Jāwah* (The Right Path on the Verification of the Question of Being and the

- Dependent on Divine Power on the Answer to Questions Coming from Jāwah), see al-Baghdādī, *Hadiyyat al-‘Ārifīn*, vol. 1, p. 245; idem, *Īdāh al-Maknūn*, vol. 1, p. 348; Kaḥḥālāh, ‘Umar Riḍā, *Mu‘jam al-Mu‘allifīn Tarājim Muṣannifī ‘l-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah* (15 vols., Beirut, Dār Ihya’ at-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1376/1957), vol. 3, p. 87.
- ⁴² See Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism*, p. 43.
- ⁴³ *al-Durra al-Bahiyyah fī Jawāb al-As‘ilat al-Jāwiyyah* (The Dazzling Pearls on the Answer to the Jāwī Questions), see al-Murādī, *Salk ad-Durar*, vol. 4, p. 125; al-Baghdādī, *Hadiyyat al-‘Ārifīn*, vol. 2, p. 342; idem, *Īdāh al-Maknūn*, vol. 2, p. 456.
- ⁴⁴ Johns, “Friends in grace,” pp. 469-85.
- ⁴⁵ This commentary of *at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalāh ilā an-Nabī* is entitled *Itḥāf adh-Dhakī bi-Sharḥ at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalāh ilā Rūḥ an-Nabī* (A Presentation to the Discerning on the Exposition of the Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet). Al-Burhānpūrī’s *at-Tuḥfat al-Mursalāh* had been studied and translated by Johns in his work, *The Gift Addressed to The Spirit of The Prophet* (Canberra, The Australian National University, 1965).
- ⁴⁶ Ibn al-Fārid’s *at-Tā‘iyyat al-Kubrā* (The Greater Ode Rhyming) and al-Farghānī’s *Muntahā al-Madārik wa-Mushtahā Lubḥ Kullī Kāmil wa-‘Ārif wa-Sālik* (The Utmost Perspicacity and the Desire for the Heart of every Perfect, Knowing and Spiritual Seeker).
- ⁴⁷ Johns, “Islam in the Malay World,” pp. 123-6.
- ⁴⁸ See al-Kattānī (d. 1382/1962), ‘Abd al-Ḥayy b. ‘Abd al-Kabīr, *Fahras al-Fahāris wa ‘l-Athbāt wa-Mu‘jam al-Ma‘ājim wa ‘l-Mashkhāt wa ‘l-Musalsalāt*, edited by Iḥsān ‘Abbās (3 vols., 2nd edition, Beirut, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1402/1982), vol. 1, p. 494; al-Murādī, *Salk ad-Durar*, vol. 1, p. 10.
- ⁴⁹ See Rizvi, Saiyid Athar Abbas, *A History of Sufism in India* (2 vols., New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 156-73, 329-33; Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism*, pp. 13-7.
- ⁵⁰ See Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, vol. 2, pp. 153, 173, 319, 329-33.
- ⁵¹ This *isnād* is recorded at the end of al-Falimbānī’s *Zahrāt al-Murīd* and as-Sinkīlī’s *Umdat al-Muḥtājīn*. See al-Falimbānī, ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad, *Zahrāt al-Murīd fī Bayān Kalimat at-Tawḥīd* (Mecca, Maṭba‘at at-Taraqqī al-Mājidīyyah al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1331/1912), pp. 11-2; as-Sinkīlī, *Umdat al-Muḥtājīn*, MSS 2466, fols. 58-9.
- ⁵² See Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism*, p. 75.

- ⁵³ For his biography and scholarly connections, see al-Muḥibbī (d. 1111/1699), Muḥammad Amīn b. Faḍl Allāh b. Muḥib Allāh al-Ḥamawī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar fī A'yān al-Qarn al-Ḥādī 'Ashar* (4 vols., Beirut, Dār aṣ-Ṣādir, s.a.), vol. 4, pp. 110-1; al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, vol. 5, p. 625.
- ⁵⁴ For further study of Ṣūfism in India during the Mughal Dynasty, see Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, vol. 2, pp. 409-32; Johns, "Aspects of Sufi Thought," pp. 72-3.
- ⁵⁵ See Johns, "Aspects of Sufi Thought," pp. 70-3.
- ⁵⁶ See al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, vol. 5, p. 577.
- ⁵⁷ See as-Sinkīlī, *Umdat al-Muḥtājīn*, MSS 2466, fol. 59.
- ⁵⁸ See al-Kūrānī (d. 1101/1690), Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan ash-Shahrānī ash-Shahrazūrī, which begins: *faqad warada su'āl min ba'ḍ Jazā'ir Jāwah sanah 1089 Hijriyah* [A Question posted from one of the Jāwah islands have reach us in 1089 A.H.], (MS Leiden University), Or. 2467, fol. 1.
- ⁵⁹ See an-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731), 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Ismā'īl, *Sharḥ Risālat al-Maslak al-Jalī fī Ḥukm Shaṭḥ al-Walī* (MS Princeton University) MS 499, fol. 2-9. Cf. Mach, Rudolf, *Catalogue of Arabic manuscripts (Yahuda section) in the Garrett Collection, Princeton University Library* (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 244.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid*, fol. 2.
- ⁶¹ See ar-Rānīrī (d. 1068/1658), Nūr ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥasanjī al-Ḥumayd ash-Shāfi'ī, *Faṭḥ al-Mubīn* (MSS National Library of Malaysia) MSS 1137, fol. 2; idem, *Ḥill aṣ-Ṣill* (MSS National Library of Malaysia), MSS 2488, fol. 67; idem, *Shifā' al-Qulūb* (MSS National Library of Malaysia), MSS 2249, fol. 3.
- ⁶² These three scholars, ar-Rānīrī, as-Sinkīlī and al-Maqassārī were each allocated to chapters three, four and five, respectively. See Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism*, pp. 52-108.
- ⁶³ Unlike the three aforementioned seventeenth century scholars, all the following eighteenth century scholars were grouped together and studied in chapter six alone. *Ibid*, pp. 109-26.
- ⁶⁴ This collections of translated *fatwās* is written in a work entitled *Muḥimmāt an-Nafā'is fī Bayān As'īlat al-Ḥādīth*.
- ⁶⁵ See Hall, D. G. E., *A History of South-East Asia* (London, Macmillan & Co Ltd; New York, St Martin's Press, 1968), pp. 37-8.
- ⁶⁶ See al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement*, pp. 13-4; Arnold, T. W., *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith* (2nd edition, New York, AMS Press Inc, 1974), p. 371; Quzwain, M. Chatib, "Syeikh

- ‘Abd al-Shamad al-Palimbani: Suatu Studi Mengenai Perkembangan Islam di Palembang dalam Abad ke 18 Masehi” in Gadjahnata, K.H.O. and Swasono, Sri-Edi (eds.), *Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Sumatera Selatan* (Jakarta, Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 1986), p. 175; idem, *Mengenal Allah: Suatu Kajian Mengenai Ajaran Tasawuf Syekh Abd. Samad al-Palimbani* 6th edition, Kuala Lumpur, Thinker’s Library Sdn. Bhd., 2003), p. 1.
- ⁶⁷ See Abdullah, Ma’moen, “Masuk dan Berkembangnya Agama Islam pada Zaman Kesultanan Palembang: Satu Analisis” in Gadjahnata, K.H.O. and Swasono, Sri-Edi (eds.), *Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Sumatera Selatan* (Jakarta, Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 1986), p. 37; Quzwain, *Mengenal Allah*, p. 2.
- ⁶⁸ Drewes (d. 1992), G. W. J., *Directions for Travellers on The Mystic Path* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), pp. 219-29. See below, Chapter 5.
- ⁶⁹ See Ronkel (d. 1954), Philippus S. van, *Catalogus Der Maleische Handschriften in Het Museum Van Het Bataviaasch Genootschap Van Kunsten En Wetenschappen* (Batavia, Albrecht & Co.; Hague, Nijhoff, 1909), p. 423; Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature*, p. 152.
- ⁷⁰ See Kemas, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Nafaḥāt ar-Raḥmān fī Manāqib Ustādhinā al-A‘zam as-Sammān* (MS Jakarta National Library), W. 126, pp. 3, 10, 17, 19, 21, 39, 52, 53, 55, 69.
- ⁷¹ See Kemas, *Nafaḥāt ar-Raḥmān*, pp. 66-8.
- ⁷² See Johns, “Islam in the Malay World” pp. 127-8.
- ⁷³ Other ‘ulamā’ not mentioned above are Ḥasan ad-Dīn b. Ja‘far al-Falimbānī, Ṭayyib b. Ja‘far al-Falimbānī, Manṣūr b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Falimbānī, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Maḥmūd al-Falimbānī, Abū al-Azhār Tāj al-Umanā’ Kinān b. Maḥmūd al-Falimbānī, and *Shaykh al-Islām Qādī as-Salṭanah* as-Sayyid ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alawī b. Aḥmad al-‘Aydarūs al-Falimbānī. As we shall see later, most of these scholars have frequently appeared in al-Fādānī’s works especially on the *Jāwī ‘ulamā’*. Cf his *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, pp. 2, 3, 5, 7, 13, 14, 17, passim; idem, *al-Arba‘ūn al-Buldāniyyah*, p. 66; idem, *al-Wāfī bi-Dhayl Tidhkār al-Maṣāfī* (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1408/1988), pp. 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, passim; idem, *al-Fayḍ ar-Raḥmānī bi-l-Jāzat Faḍīlat ash-Shaykh Muḥammad Taqī al-‘Uthmānī* (1st edition, Beirut, Dār al-Bashā’ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1406/1986), p. 12.

Abbreviations

AS	<i>Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques</i>
BKI	<i>Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde</i>
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
EI	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam</i>
EI ²	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition</i>
GAL	<i>Geschichte Arabischen Litterature</i>
JAAS	<i>Journal of Asian and African Studies</i>
JMBRAS	<i>Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JSBRAS	<i>Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
SAW	<i>ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam</i> literally means, ‘peace be upon him’ (P.B.U.H) is said whenever the name of Prophet Muhammad is mentioned

A Note on Technicality

As a rule in this book, to differentiate between the '*ulamā*' of *Jāwī* or of Arab origins who had migrated and settled down in the Archipelago, from their peers in the Arab world, 'al-Jāwī' is added to their existing *nisbah* (attribution). This is to indicate and immediately distinguish these scholars especially if their *nisbah* is not familiar to the reader. However, if these *Jāwī* scholars are from the modern period, e.g. after the independence of Indonesia in 1945 and Malaysia in 1957, the *nisbah* al-Indūnīsī or al-Malīzī is added instead of al-Jāwī, respectively.

For Arabic book titles, an approximate translation is given immediately in parenthesis but only in the first instance, and is also available in the bibliography.

As for the conversion of the A.H. to A.D., I have used the date-conversion program software issued by the Astronomical Department, Kolej Ugama Sultan Zainal Abidin (KUSZA), Terengganu, Malaysia, which was given during my study for the 'Certificate of Islamic Astronomy' program. However, as some of the months of the A.H. years in this study are often not provided by biographers, the dating according to the A.D. cannot be precisely indicated in such instances.

ISLAM IN THE MALAY WORLD

AL-FALIMBANI'S SCHOLARSHIP

ISLAM IN THE MALAY WORLD : AL-FALIMBANI'S SCHOLARSHIP

Mohammed Hussain Ahmad

Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani is an eighteenth century Muslim scholar from Palembang, located in the Indonesian island of Sumatra. Through the examination of his unpublished manuscripts and published works, this book explores al-Falimbani's biography, his various scholarly contributions, Sufi orientation as well as the intellectual developments of the Malay Archipelago. It uncovers evidence of al-Falimbani's great erudition in the major Islamic sciences by tracing his early education, the developments of his intellectual maturity and the influence of various well-known scholars who shared their expertise with him. This book represents the first product of research which utilises a wide range of data and classical sources relating to al-Falimbani, including manuscripts, *Jawi* books, Arabic biographical dictionaries and many others included in a comprehensive bibliography list. *Islam in the Malay World: Al-Falimbani's Scholarship* will serve as a valuable reference for Muslim scholars and general readers who have an interest in the traditional Malay religio-intellectual culture.

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